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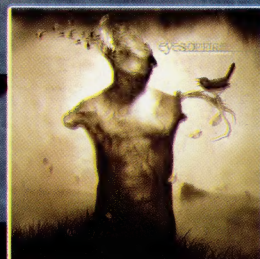
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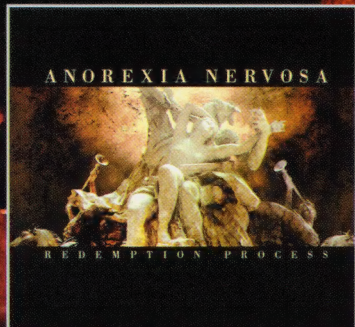
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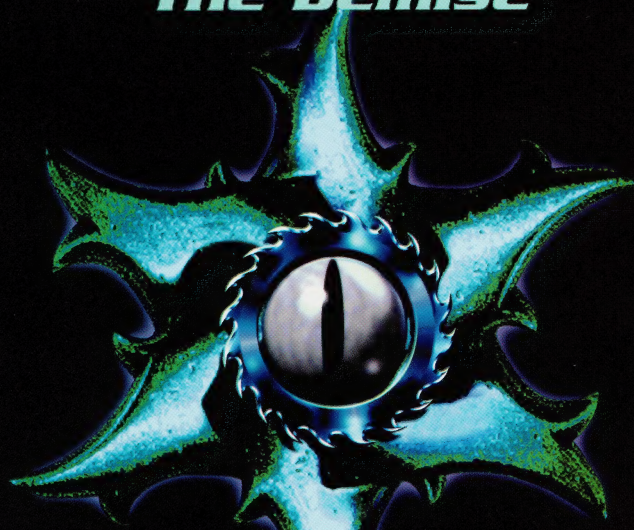
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You are damn lucky to be reading
for Star Wars Battlefront in Pit

By Jim Mills



BLOODIED THUMBS

ing a review

magazine **STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT**

Here you will not get any biased opinions due to advertising money. Speaking of the real deal, Star Wars: Battlefront is the game that I, as well as millions of other fans have been awaiting. It's a 1st or 3rd person shooter action adventure game with a small story line to follow, but that's not the draw of the game. You're not going to play Star Wars: Battlefront for hours on end because of the freaking story. You are going to spend countless hours, and possible risk getting divorced or dumped because you get to fight, now pay attention, on either side, in either era of Star Wars.

Star Wars Battlefront is different than any other Star Wars game to date. It gives you the option of choosing whether you want to fight on the Empire side, or with the rebels. You also get to choose what era you'd like to fight in, Historical or the Clone Wars. Then finally have your pick of the available soldiers, Storm Trooper, Wookie, Fighter Pilot, Imperial Pilot, Clone Droid and the Jar Jar character, who is fun to shoot in the face. Each character has it's own traits, like sniping, combat, or driving vehicles. You don't have access to Darth Vader or Luke Skywalker as a playable characters in the game at all. Which is sort of cool that the game focuses on just the soldiers and ultimately the insane battles that take place. Once you engage in heavy fighting with the sound real loud through your stereo, you will see and hear how similar the game is to the movies, and how insanely nuts life can be during the battles. You have very limited weapons, it's not like Halo or something where you have very in depth weaponry, it's perfectly simple just like the movies. You have your blaster rifle, blaster pistol, sniper rifle, a rocket launcher, grenades and so forth. All that is fine because you also have access to vehicles that you have not been able to use before like a Snow Speeder, AT-ST, Speederbike, the AT-AT Walker, and bunch more throughout the different worlds.

You'll travel through Naboo, Tatooine, Hoth, and Endor to accomplish the specified task of taking over command points to win the battle. During this endeavor you have to fight off HUNDREDS of opponents. Each world has it's own specific missions to accomplish, as well as holding down command points that are set through out the area. For example, when you are fighting in Hoth, you have to hop in a Snow Speeder, and use the line to bring down the AT-ATs, just like in the movie. And it's real hard too, because you have the Imperial soldiers attacking you while the AT-ST and AT-AT try to make Swiss cheese of puny Snow Speeder. It's intense and absolutely crazy. In certain worlds you will have the native soldiers helping you or fighting you depending on which side you choose; the Tustin Raiders and Ewoks also join in during the battles.

Star Wars Battlefront uses the movie SFX, so the blasters, and cannons sound just like you're at the theater. Everything from the footsteps on snow, grass, wood, and rock all sound awesome. The various worlds have background noise like birds, forest sounds, and when you're in Endor, the Ewoks are yelling for the entire battle, which is kind of annoying, so shoot them in the face.

The worlds themselves look pretty awesome as well. There's nothing too in-depth with texture or detailing, but the foliage, and buildings are pretty sweet looking. The scaling is cool as hell too, when you're running between the legs of the AT-AT you will see and feel just how gigantic it is, as well as fighting the AT-ST head-on. Awesome.

And finally if you can play Star Wars: Battlefront online with 32 other nerds, you'll spend hours and hours fading into the SW: B realm. This game is certainly worth wasting hours and hours of your life away and goes down in history as one of my favorite games ever, for sure.

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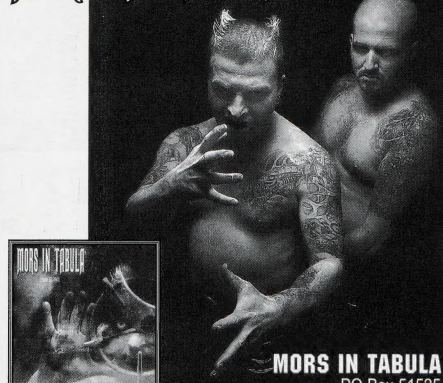
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By Micha Kite

Featuring Marcus Siepen



Every guitarist has a bag of tricks, which is noticeable after a couple of songs. They're there when you're caught in a bind or need a bit of flash. The key to growth is to push the limits and wander into the obscure pushing the boundaries of your imagination with a combination of scales and modes. First they teach you the rules, and then they teach you to break the rules. Some never adhere to the rules while others swear by them. It's not a matter of right or wrong but what values the player holds and what makes them unique. Marcus Siepen, a classically trained guitarist has been at this game for a long time but stagnation is the furthest thing from his mind.

Pit: How old were you when you started playing guitar and did you have any formal training such as classical?

Marcus Siepen: I started playing at age 11. I took classical guitar for about five years and learned all the basics then I switched to become a "rocker" (laughs).

So I take it you are probably still good at playing classical?

Yes, I can still play. Sometimes I am even playing some of those same songs I learned back then because I like them.

Who were some of your influences that made you want to become a "rocker"?

IRON MAIDEN, BLACK SABBATH and those kinds of bands. I started to listen to metal at the best times when I was 11 or 12 years old. Playing guitar didn't have anything to do with

this, my parents just wanted me to learn an instrument and soon after I started playing I just got into metal. I got the IRON MAIDEN *Killers* album, which brought me into it. I was so hooked right from the beginning. The twin guitars of JUDAS PRIEST and IRON MAIDEN also the terrific riffing of Tony Iommi just blew me away. Those were the kind of bands that made me switch to electric guitar.

What was your first gig like and what kind of band were you in?

The first gig was actually a BLIND GUARDIAN gig, but we hadn't been called BG yet. We released our 2nd demo tape and the show was at our hometown in front of like 600 people. I was nervous like hell (both laugh). I had never been on a stage before, I was used to

packed rehearsal rooms in front of, I don't know how many friends, but I mean to play a gig on stage I was so scared but it was fun (both laugh).

How long was it before you started opening up for national acts or did that not happen till after you got a record deal?

We never really opened up for any other band actually. I mean we supported bands at big festivals but we always headlined our own shows and that was cool.

Who can you say you shared the stage with or hung out with that blew your mind when you thought, "hey I'm in the same room with..."

I have always been a huge SAXON fan and on our tour sometime around '95 they opened up for us. My old heroes opened up for us. That

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just amazed me and the fact that they are the nicest people I have ever met in this business, such nice guys, so down to earth, they are still great friends of ours.

Moving onto guitars what are some of your favorite guitars to use and do you have an endorsement deal?

I am endorsed by ESP since the 90's. I am a Les Paul addict, definitely. I have a couple of Gibson guitars. Basically I sold all my other guitars because I stopped using them. If it's not a Les Paul I won't touch it.

Do you have any prized possessions like a '69 Les Paul or something like that?

I would love to have one of those but unfortunately I don't. Concerning Gibson the oldest one is from '95 or something. No antiques or whatever but mine sound great and I will never sell them. I just love them. The funny thing is, I have always used custom guitars and when I got my endorsement deal with ESP I always told them "I want the neck thinner" or whatever and when I bought my first Gibson I went to the shop and there was a black Les Paul and I said "give it to me!" I tried it and I loved it, it was just the regular out of the shop model, no special modifications, nothing. It just blew me away. I couldn't keep my hands off this and for a very long time it was my main guitar, I don't even know for how many years it has been one of my absolute favorite guitars.

Moving on to amps, are you a Marshall guy?

When I started I was a Marshall guy, yes. I guess everybody in metal or rock bands played Marshall at least for some point. I still have my Marshall and it rocks but I switched to a Triple Rectifier, I love it, it blows everything away. It is the best amp I have ever had. I combine a Triple Rectifier and a Les Paul guitar and it is just amazing.

Are there still things you are aspiring to accomplish? Do you still have dreams even though you are in a big rock band?

Well of course this was a dream coming true. When we started playing music together everybody dreamed of getting a record deal and getting the chance to make our music and go on tours. This business is a dream for me, I enjoy it so much, you get to play music, travel around the world, meet all these great people and get paid for it, what could be better? (laughs) There is still so much we can do and there are still many countries we haven't played yet, so many places to conquer. We are living our dream and it is awesome.

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END

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Featuring Darren Cesca

Pit: Darren, when and why did you start playing drums?

Darren Cesca: I started playing at the age of ten. But even before then I think my parents and I knew I was going to play the drums. I had a small toy drum when I was very young that I used to just beat senseless. So as soon as drums were available to play in school I was really excited.

To answer the why, well I don't really know. I just think I had a natural sense for rhythm and liked hitting things with sticks. I wasn't really into music that much at a young age but I think drumming opened me up to that right away. I mean, when you're ten, you don't really know a lot about music or have any idea what you want to do with your life.

I know that you attended Berklee College of Music in Boston, Mass. What was that program like? What did you learn? Who were your teachers?

Berklee was really the one thing that made me the drummer I am today. It took me to that next level. It created a new practice regimen for me and completely changed the way I think about approaching my drums. The program itself was mostly jazz based. I feel that when I attended, it was still dominated by a jazz influence. It just seemed like rock and metal drummers were never given as much respect as a really good jazz player was. Because of this, after my first year, I didn't know if I wanted to keep going. It was hard to get noticed there because I was practicing DEICIDE while everyone else was doing jazz.

Eventually, in the little practice rooms, people would notice when I would come out sweating my ass off! It was almost foreign to them, seeing someone at a school like Berklee making drumming such a physical thing. It became a test of physical tolerance and mental endurance for me. That was another aspect that really drew me into it.

The second big turning point in my drumming began when I met with the teacher Mike Mangini. This guy just blew me away. We're



This column is dedicated to the drummers of extreme metal. We have featured many or most of the top drummers in the genres of death and black metal. But there are quite a few new drummers out there that are playing this style and dominating the skins. And it's likely you have not heard of them yet. This month I talked with Darren Cesca of GORATORY, check out their new album, *Rice on Suede* to hear his drumming acrobatics. He is an extremely impressive player and will ultimately be very well known. We can all learn from this guy.

talking a real drum scientist here. He has the world's fastest hands and knows exactly how he got them there. We talked about everything from technique and mental focus to vision and even to what muscle to use when and why. This is the kind of guy that simply knew how to get me where I wanted to be. With his guidance and my new found time and devotion to drumming I quickly excelled past any goals I thought previously unreachable. Once you reach one goal you just want to set another one for yourself so you can break that one as well.

Even though Mike brought speed and endurance into perspective for me I had some other great teachers that I should mention. Steve Wilkes, Larry Finn, and Rod Morgenstein all helped me a great deal and encouraged me to work hard at playing death metal if that was my real passion. Back then it became my passion and still is today.

GORATORY is your main gig but what other projects have you worked with? Any new projects in the works?

Currently GORATORY is at the top of the list. We just released a new disc, *Rice on Suede*. It's out on Amputated Vein Records. As far as other projects I currently am part of the band PILLORY. We're actually just finishing up our debut CD *No Life Guard at the Gene Pool*. PILLORY came together after the band VIRULENCE that I used to be in broke up. And actually, I write the majority of the material for the band. I've actually been playing guitar and bass for about 8 years or so. I also have a solo project called DESICCATE. It's my chance to write without having to deal with anyone else. It also has a lot of diversity, very technical, with extremely brutal vocals. I work on DESICCATE when I have free time between PILLORY and GORATORY. Other than the PILLORY CD coming out, nothing new is in the works, but I do drum programming on side. I'm also always looking for studio work

and touring work as well if I can fit it into my schedule.

You play double bass very fast. What kind of pedals do you use? And do you think that the pedal makes as much of a difference as people say?

That's a good one. First of all thanks for saying I play double bass fast. I do my best but still have a long way to go before reaching any kind of physical limit in my speed abilities.

For pedals I use Pearl Power Shifter Eliminators. They're really great pedals and really durable. There are tons of ways to customize them so you can adjust them to your personal style and technique. I think that's so important to find a comfortable pedal to bring with you wherever you go. Do I feel the pedal makes a difference? Sure I do. I mean, if you have an old squeaky pedal, it's not going to do the job as well. But for me, I love the feel of my pedals and have not even come close to reaching my limit of speed on them. Do I feel my pedal is holding me back at all, definitely not? The only reason I don't play faster than I do is because I haven't worked hard enough. I don't think people should just change to what everyone else is playing just because it's the new thing. A pedal doesn't make you fast, hard work and good technique does. The right pedal just helps you along the way.

Also I know from the new GORATORY record *Rice on Suede* that you are playing the 'Gravity Blast'. Sometimes it's called the 'One banded roll' on the snare. The first time I heard this double time snare beat was on the first ORIGIN demo.

I think it's a very cool technique. Everyone that does it has their own slight variation. I worked on mine with my instructor Mike Mangini since he had his own version of it as well. I definitely consider it part of my sound, not some trick. I've learned to really just drop it in

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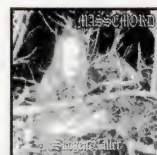
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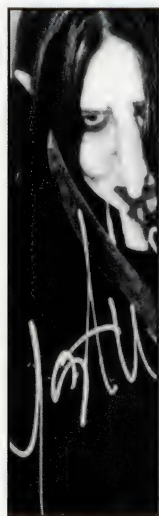
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anywhere with relative ease. Wait for the next GORATORY CD; I'll have simulations roll blasting on the snare and ride cymbal. I pride myself on doing innovative and diverse blasting. I'm always trying to discover new things every time I sit down at the kit.

What is your equipment setup like?

I'm using a Pearl Master custom birch kit with 10", 12", 14", 16" toms, 16x22 kick, a Pearl 5x14" free floating brass snare and an auxiliary Pearl Popcorn snare. Pedals are Pearl Power Shifter Eliminators, Cymbals are all Zildjian, and there are 14 of them on this kit. I also use Evans heads, Zildjian Mike Mangini sticks, and I run an Alesis DM5 for kick triggering.

Since I produced your last record I know some things about your methods. Would you explain the way you write all the drum parts beforehand and all the details pertaining to this method of recording?

It comes down to really wanting to write the best record possible. I've always thought of drums as a melodic instrument, and not just something for playing a beat on. I think I have a certain sound to my writing and that comes from the methods you talk of. What we do is to write the entire record on the computer first. I program the drums parts I'll play and the other guys lay down pre-production tracks as well. Another reason I write on the computer is specifically for the sound of my drum parts.

Working on the computer, I can really be meticulous about everything from drum fills to cymbal parts. Then I print out the sheet music and learn my parts off that. This may seem like a lot of work but once I learn the song I know it. I know every fill, every kick drum pattern and I don't have to improvise in a live setting, which I like. Instead of trying to come up with a fill on the spot, I can just focus on playing the correct fill well.

Would you consider playing to a click or pre recorded drum mix live?

That all depends on the style of music I'd be playing. For death metal, I don't think I'd use a click or drum mix. One reason I spend so much time learning songs to a click and recording a CD to a click is so that live, I have the confidence to play without one. Also I think with live death metal it's important to let your energy and adrenaline take over a bit. It is such a physical thing. Sometimes I play things faster live and I think that's ok. Death metal is about speed for me and as long as the band is still tight then you might as well push those tempos.

Who are your drumming influences?

Even though I do listen to many styles of music I really only look to top quality death metal drummers when it comes to inspiration. So here's a list. Max Kolesne from KRISIUN, Tony Laureano from NILE, Kevin Talley from DYING FETUS, Nick Barker from DIMMU BORGIR and John Longstreth from ORIGIN. These are basically guys that at one point in time I analyzed everything they did. I learned what they played how they played it, what tempo they played at and played along numerous times to their records. These are the guys that taught me where the top level of death metal is. It helped me set a bar for

myself of what was expectable and what wasn't.

What can you tell us about practicing? What can you recommend to drummers that want to get their speed and technique to a higher level?

It's going to be really hard to explain what it takes to do what we do. I'm actually looking to put a book out someday on extreme speed and endurance drumming. I definitely want to get into teaching after I'm done making CD's and hopefully playing around the world.

But if I had to say anything about it, I'd say you need the right technique and a hell of a lot of determination. Without the right technique you're dead in the water. You can practice as much as you want but without proper technique you'll hit a wall or you'll injure yourself. I've heard of too many guys getting hurt due to bad technique. I think it's really important to at least get some starting lessons from someone in the death metal genre before you try to really push yourself. I mean you're not going to drive a car at 100 mph without being taught to drive at 20 mph first.

I just think people walk into death metal wanting to play as fast as they can without really thinking through what they are doing. It's like a sport and all athletes train if they want to get better. So just make sure you approach this style of drumming with education. Take things slow and be ready, it's going to be a long process. Just don't expect to be great in a month or a year. You have to be in for the long haul.

Thanks Darren! Looking forward to seeing you play live in the near future!

END

The reissue of the year goes to Metal Blade for VOIVOD's *War And Pain*. This is by far state of the art work. You get *Anachronism*, which is the recording of VOIVOD's first show, *To The Death* which is the Metal Massacre 5 sessions, and finally *Morgoth Invasion*, a live demo from 1984. These tapes were once available from the Iron Gang mail order, but by now are sought after collector items. Now there is everything in one package. This set also includes a bonus enhanced-disc with band biography, lyrics, pictures, art, etc. Everything is just outstanding, it doesn't get any better. Whoever was in charge on this project created a masterpiece.

Contact: www.metalblade.com

German metal goddess DORO has released her first DVD. This two-disc set is called *Forever*. It includes a full live performance, a collection of all the DORO clips, as well as plenty of bonus material. If you're a DORO fan this is a great supplement to your collection. New fans will be fully educated about DORO and her amazing journey in the world of heavy metal. Beautifully put together, and done with full professionalism. Highly recommended, great set.

Contact: www.spvusa.com

MANOWAR are at it again in the DVD world. *Hell On Earth pt. III* is the continuation of the visual crusade. This two-disc package contains everything a fan wants, live performances, behind the scenes antics, and documentaries. What more can you ask for? It's like you were there. If this DVD set doesn't make you feel glorious I can't imagine what will?

Contact: www.spvusa.com

KANSAS has remastered and expanded their first two records. The two in question are the self-titled *Kansas*, and *Song For America*. Both are considered influential releases that have inspired many other recordings when it comes to melody and time changes. When listening to these you can't help but wonder how fresh and original they sound today.

The albums include some bonus tracks, liner notes, and photos from the archives. Very nicely done. Let's hope the rest of the KANSAS' catalogue can get the same treatment.

Contact: www.legacyrecordings.com

SEBASTIAN BACH's DVD is titled *Forever Wild* and includes BACH's recent stage adventures as well as plenty of bonus material. Some of it is very funny, and some strictly for documentary purposes. While watching you will understand why SEBASTIAN BACH is one of rock and roll's original madmen. Good stuff and plenty of attitude here.

He's still "youth gone wild".

Contact: www.eaglerocknet.com

QUEENSRYCHE's *The Art Of Live* is a new DVD that documents band's recent album, and their incredible tour with DREAM THEATER. The filming of the DVD has little bit of a different vibe. It doesn't follow the same path as on the last release, and I found that to be very original. I very much enjoyed QUEENSRYCHE's last studio album, so this comes as a very nice supplement. It is also available as an audio disc, so pick what you like best, or get them both for the full experience.

Contact: www.sanctuaryrecordsgroup.com

DISMEMBER finally got a DVD, raaaaagh! The title of this release is *Live Blasphemies*. The first disc shows the band doing what they do best, crumbling the stage with a very intense show that will blow your mind. The other disc delves into DISMEMBER's long and rich history and is a very well done documentary. Watching this it's hard to believe that it has been that long since they first came onto the scene. A highly recommended set here, one not to be missed.

Contact: www.escapi.com

Recently featured FORCE OF EVIL now has a really great live DVD out, and who knows what the chances are of seeing this band live. Well now you can have the total

stage experience anytime you want, and best of all there are some FATE related surprises as the band consists of the Sherman/ Denner dynamic duo. It's rare that a side project can be this powerful, but in this case it works.

Contact: www.escapi.com

ANVIL has a new album out titled *Back To Basics*. While the album is great and has all the ANVIL trademarks, what makes it even more special is a bonus DVD.

The DVD is titled *Live At Wacken 1998*. The title explains everything and the performance is outstanding.

Seeing ANVIL come alive in front of a big crowd is something special. As far as I know this is the first footage of ANVIL available in any form. As of now the only way to get this release is by purchasing the album.

What a deal.

Contact: www.screamingferret.com

MELIAH RAGE's new release *Barely Human* offers similar bonus disc deal that includes a digitally remastered version of the 1995 release *Unfinished Business* featuring GODSMACK front man Sully Erna on drums.

Awesome. MELIAH RAGE fans must be happy with such amazing deal, as well as any accidental fan that buys two albums for the price on one. What a great way to promote new releases, more labels should take notice.

Contact: www.screamingferret.com

DESTRUCTION has birthed their first DVD titled *Live Discharge*, featuring tracks from all eras, which include Schmier on vocals. No objections here. Being a DESTRUCTION devotee this is a dream come true.

It's well done, and well put together. I don't think I have to once again brag about Mike's excellent guitar delivery, or Schmier's singing abilities. They are top notch. Only difference is that this time it comes to your room in a visual form. If you like DESTRUCTION as much as I do, you simply need to own this DVD. According to Schmier, the U.S. edition was supposed to have live CD from Japan included as bonus. My copy does not have it, but it's worth investigating.

Contact: www.nuclearblastusa.com

CARNAL FORGE's DVD is titled *Destroy Live*, and that's exactly what the band does. When watching this show you will be overwhelmed by its intensity. This is a really well put together package. Not only do you get the professionally filmed show. In addition you get many other bootleg videos from different shows. The quality of those is not as good as the main performance, but as a bonus it fits great. There's also a detailed biography included, as well as individual member profiles.

Contact: www.musicvideodistributors.com

GREEN CARNATION's DVD is titled *Alive and Well In Krakow* and is yet another great package this time documenting a very unusual death metal band.

It's great to be able to see them live, in your living room, as bands like GREEN CARNATION don't really get to tour the U.S. In addition to the performance there's a biography, and a very good band interview. If that wasn't enough, there's a nice booklet with photos and lyrics. Excellent job here.

Contact: www.musicvideodistributors.com

Metalmania 2003 titles a DVD that documents one of the most prestigious festivals in Europe. It's a compilation of live clips from: LOST SOUL, ENTER CHAOS, MARDUK, THE EXPLOITED, SAXON, OPETH, VADER, ANATHEMA, SAMAEAL, and others. In addition to a DVD, the package includes a CD with tracks by other, 2nd stage acts. It's a great documentary from an annual event, in some ways you will wish the whole set was made available from certain artist. But, you simply can't have it all. This package is still great, and literary brings

Metalmania into your living room.

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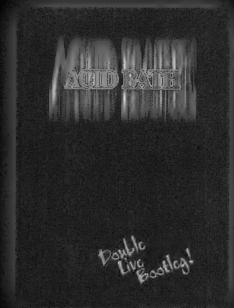
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Pit: You're pushing a decade in existence.

Derek Bonner: We're close to that. I don't know; it's weird to say that because I've had so many different lineups. We've had so many different types of sounds; it's been the same concept, but a different band.

What type of music did you want make at the beginning of the band's existence? Is it the music you're doing now?

and some lighter songs.

Yeah, I think we confuse a lot of people, man. Unfortunately, in this day and age you have to label your music to be something in particular and we try to do that, but for us it's hard because we have so many different elements in the music and so many different influences. I just don't know what to tell people a lot of the time. I tell people it's definitely dark metal, it's emotional and passionate, but at the

type of music that we write because we're just all over the place, everybody in the band. Sure, there's a few metal bands out there that we still like and listen to, but at the same time, being as open as we are to just everything, it comes very naturally. It's not forced at all.

One thing that really stood out is on the second track, "Even the Vultures Have Moved On (A Tragic Love Story)," when the clean harmony

My amazement at the strength of LILITU's The Delores Lesion was only surpassed by my discovery that the band has been around for almost a decade. Vocalist/guitarist Derek Bonner is the heart and soul of this Atlanta, Georgia band, guiding it through a handful of albums, all the lineup changes, and a musical evolution from dark wave, more gothic-styled music to the excellent mix of dark atmospheres, brooding melodies, and ripping Swedish style metal that is heard on The Delores Lesion, the band's debut for The End Records.

BY SCOTT ALISOGLU

Absolutely not, not at all. That stuff was really more dark wave, like more doom influenced. It had a heavy, like MY DYING BRIDE/ANATHEMA, influence, and it was really along those lines.

When I read about LILITU's style being dark melodic metal, I was thinking something a little more gothic, something not quite as heavy. Then those first three tracks on The Delores Lesion hit and I was like, holy shit! It was more of a Swedish-style shredding attack, except that you add in harmony vocals, keys,

same time I don't think just because we have Scandinavian influences that we necessarily sound like that. I think we have our own brand of misery. There is something different about it. We're not mimicking a lot of the bands that we listen to. And me personally, I don't even listen to heavy music.

Does not listening to heavy music make it difficult to play heavy music?

No, it doesn't. Obviously, you hear the European influences. We know what they are and we have those influences, but it makes it easier to write the

vocal comes in. It really grabs you.

Right, and that's why I say I think we confuse a lot of people. For instance, somebody that's not familiar with the band get past the first track ["Only the End of the World Again"] and it's balls to the wall, guitar in your face, and the rough vocals, and then the second track you obviously hear that there's more there. There are a lot of clean vocals and a lot of melody and a lot of emotion in what we do. It all comes naturally. I think we've found our sound and this is probably the sound that we're gonna stick with for quite a while.



The End Records

Pit: I've been a big fan of yours for quite some time, and I've never had the chance to talk with you...

Burton C. Bell: And *Pit Magazine* has been around for a long time.... About as long as we've been a band, right—about 14 years?

Yeah, about that long. I'm sure most people are familiar with your history, but maybe just give us a quick overview; maybe talk some about what may have changed through the years, how it's all evolved...

All right. **FEAR FACTORY**, as I mentioned before, has been around for about 14 years, and during that time, it's been up and down, constantly—it's like life: there are many peaks and there are many valleys. **FEAR FACTORY** got together October 31st, 1990—Halloween, of course. After a year and a half and three demos, we got signed to RoadRunner Records, and our first record came out [in 1992]. We were on RoadRunner for a few years, and I feel we made a mark with our albums, with our different styles, mainly industrial, death and grind. And then we moved forward, incor-

ber orchestra. And also on that album, as a B-side, we covered GARY NEWMAN'S *Cars*, which brought Gary Newman into it, and it was lot of fun. Being the B-side, radio stations started playing it a lot and it got included on the second pressing of the album, and we inevitably made a video for it. And, because of that song, that helped us get our first gold album. The last album on RoadRunner was *Digimortal*, and there was a lot going on—a lot on interpersonal relationships, a lot of bad blood was happening. So, after *Digimortal*, I left the band in 2002 and basically turned my back. After that, I started doing my own things. And, like, this was one of the low points of **FEAR FACTORY**, because at that point there wasn't a future for **FEAR FACTORY**. And the irony of this all is that, as I was working on my own project, I got word from RoadRunner that even though the band disbanded, I got word that we were still contractually bound and obligated to RoadRunner—not only as a band but as individuals as well. I was doing my own things and [the other members] were doing their own thing, and we just wanted to move forward in

FEAR FACTORY

BY ERRIN KLEIN
PHOTO BY FRANK WHITE



If you haven't heard of FEAR FACTORY, then you can hardly call yourself any sort of metal fan. FEAR FACTORY is one of the bands that has made this music genre what it is, and they were one of the first to blend and blur the boundaries of what metal can be. We almost saw their demise two years ago, but now Burton C. Bell, Raymond Herrera and Christian Olde Wolbers are back and quite possibly the best they've ever been.



porating electronic-industrial, with help from FRONTLINE ASSEMBLY. And then we started doing remixes. The album, *Demanufacture*, really put us on the map because we incorporated various styles, and I think this was the album where we finally became cohesive, where we finally found our sound. It was a really landmark album for ourselves. We were still on RoadRunner, we were touring with new and old bands like MEGADETH to OZZY; we did Ozfest as well... IRON MAIDEN—all different types of bands. We did another remix album called *Remanufacture*, which remixed almost all the songs from *Demanufacture*, with different djs, as well as musicians from FRONTLINE ASSEMBLY. The next album, *Obsolète*, came out in 98, that record was definitely a good move for us. It had a bit more of an organic sense to it. We even used a live cham-

ber orchestra. And also on that album, as a B-side, we covered GARY NEWMAN'S *Cars*, which brought Gary Newman into it, and it was lot of fun. Being the B-side, radio stations started playing it a lot and it got included on the second pressing of the album, and we inevitably made a video for it. And, because of that song, that helped us get our first gold album. The last album on RoadRunner was *Digimortal*, and there was a lot going on—a lot on interpersonal relationships, a lot of bad blood was happening. So, after *Digimortal*, I left the band in 2002 and basically turned my back. After that, I started doing my own things. And, like, this was one of the low points of **FEAR FACTORY**, because at that point there wasn't a future for **FEAR FACTORY**. And the irony of this all is that, as I was working on my own project, I got word from RoadRunner that even though the band disbanded, I got word that we were still contractually bound and obligated to RoadRunner—not only as a band but as individuals as well. I was doing my own things and [the other members] were doing their own thing, and we just wanted to move forward in

that's where we are now.

I remember hearing that you left the band, but I guess I didn't think all that much more about it because you're now popping up on the "Saw" soundtrack—that's what I heard last, so obviously I was missing quite a bit! [both of us laugh] Do you feel, in a way, that this has been a rebirth for FEAR FACTORY?

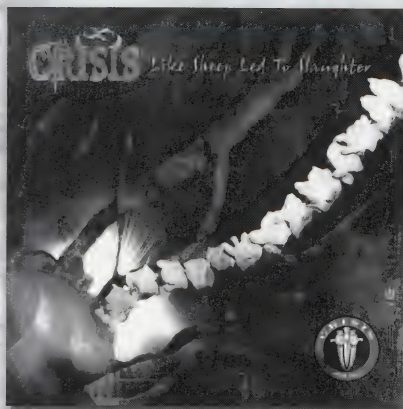
Uhh, I would say, it's like a breath of fresh air, somewhat of a rebirth, resurrection-type thing, and, you know, I wouldn't call it a new direction, exactly, but you do explore new avenues. One of the reasons we got signed to [our new label] Liquid 8 Records is because **FEAR FACTORY** has a strong fan base, and therefore, there will always be the essence of **FF** in whatever we do. But, we can try new things and still be what we are. The song, "Bite the Hand that

Bleeds"—it's a rather new type of song for us. We've done things like this before, but I think this is like we finally did it right on this one. It's a slower song, it's moody... dare I say it has a SABBATH vibe, but it's still a **FF** kind of thing; it has the definite sound and texture. The song was chosen for this movie because it really fits the vibe in the context of the movie.

How do you see FEAR FACTORY's place in the industry, after nearly 15 years, as you continue and evolve?

Well I definitely feel that we have made a mark with our music, with our style and vibe, and I definitely believe we've influenced a lot of people, and that's always a good thing. For me, my reward is that I know I've influenced many artists to try our sound. I think we've had a little hand in the music genre, and to me, that's my reward.

Dark tales for the modern age



CRISIS "Like Sheep Led To Slaughter"

CRISIS manage to once again offer another true original full of head-spinning songwriting complexity. Fully showcasing the band's (dis)harmonic balance of dark art metal and experimental hardcore the music implores relentless waves of primal energy and unmitigated brutality! The result is a cathartic sonic experience fully embraced by the apocalyptic lyrics of Karyn Crisis, who once again, delivers an impressive array of contrasting and insanely captivating unique vocals!

WINDS "The Imaginary Direction Of Time"

The third album from WINDS, "The Imaginary Direction of Time," creates an uncompromising combination of classical, progressive and dark metal music with intricate sounds and harmonies. Following in the vein of the previous albums with philosophically charged lyrics, the new album takes WINDS to new heights both in the lyrical and musical field. This is without a doubt the band's most elegant album to date, with a new and added dimension of intricacy due to the increased collective effort in the compositional process.



PECCATUM "Lost In Reverie"

Third album by one of the most artistic and experimental bands from Norway. Featuring Ihsahn (Emperor) and Ihriel (Star Of Ash), "Lost In Reverie" pushes the envelope of musical crossbreeds even further. Blurring the lines of organic performances and electronics, they indulge into delightfully bizarre sonic landscapes and shed new visions of light to dark music.

SUBTERRANEAN MASQUERADE

"Temporary Psychotic State"

"Temporary Psychotic State" is a two track EP featuring over 17 minutes of classic progressive rock. Built upon layers of orchestral arrangements, psychedelic passages and rocking post rock blasting, this is a truly dynamic release that will appeal to fans of extreme metal as well to those who enjoy edgy, dark progressive rock. The release features a stunning line-up including Paul Kuhr (Novembers Doom), JWW (Agalloch), Tino LoSicco (Epoch of Unlight), a guest appearance by Andy Winter (Winds) and an ensemble of strings, keyboards and folklore female vocals.



LILITHA "The Delores Lesion"

Third album by Lilitha. Out of Atlanta, GA they offer a mesmerizing mix of atmospheric melodic death metal with catchy guitar riffery and a variety of both raspy and emotional clean vocals. According to Terrorizer: "Dreary, gothic-tinged atmospheres and lighter, more ethereal passages are cut throughout with short blasts of melodic dark/black metal to forge a sound that is European-influenced, but not blind mimicry. Brooding male vocals predominate, but black metal-inspired rasping occasionally offsets that balance to give the compositions a little more acerbic bite."

AGE OF SILENCE "Acceleration"

The debut release of this unique Norwegian constellation features Lazare (Borknagar, Solefald) on vocals, Eikind (ex. Khold / Tulus) on bass, Hellhammer (Mayhem, Winds, Arcturus) on drums, Andy Winter (Winds) on keyboards, Extant and Kobbergaard (By Pale Light) on guitars. The music can best be described as a mix between thrash metal, progrock, psychedelia and avantgarde insanity. Lyrically Lazare takes a conceptual journey in the vein of The Matrix or Dark City mixed in with some elaborate futuristic thoughts and concepts relating to the stock market, invoices, and the rat race of human life in general.

NOVEMBERS DOOM

"To Welcome The Fade" (w/ bonus CD)

Re-release of one of the top doom/death albums to come out of the USA. The album of this prominent band from Chicago, IL includes a bonus CD with the out of print EP "For Every Leaf That Falls", 2 live tracks and a live video of "Within My Flesh."



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Oh, to relive the glory days of the eighties, denim jackets with patches, tape trading, sleeping outside for concert tickets all things from a simpler forgotten age. **3 INCHES OF BLOOD** are a band that is firmly looking back at those wondrous days for inspiration on their latest album, *Advance and Vanquish*. Based in Vancouver, the Canadian twin vocalist act takes a classic metal standpoint on their new Roadrunner Records release. Twenty years ago, they would be welcomed with open arms, but today there are many who are skeptical of such a "retro" sound. Touring with bands as varied as **THE DARKNESS** and **THE BLACK DAHLIA MURDER**, **3 INCHES OF BLOOD** are unflinching in their quest for domination. Vocalists Jamie Hooper and Cam Pipes share stage duties and interview duties as well.

3 Inches of Blood

BY CHRISTOPHER ALO

Pit: How did the band get started?

Jamie Hooper: Originally it was three guitars and just myself singing, Cam hadn't joined the band yet. We recorded a demo of five songs and Cam added vocals over it and we like it so much that we asked him to join the band.

Now Cam does the high-end vocals and Jamie you do the deeper more aggressive vocals?

Cam Pipes: Yeah, that's right.

This is actually your second album, right? I couldn't find much information on the debut.

JH: In 2001 we recorded our first album called *Battle Cry in the Winter Sun* and it was released in Canada and the UK only. Now we are getting set for the new one to come out throughout the world via Roadrunner Records.

When did *Battle Cry* come out?

CP: March of 2002. It was on Arena Rock recordings. They were going to put it out in the states as well, but it never happened. Then we started talking to Roadrunner and we figured we wouldn't even bother with getting it out in the states. It's available in Canada but it was pretty limited. We decided to repress it ourselves. A label in the UK picked it up and got it out there last summer in the UK.

JH: After that we got tour the UK for a month with **THE DARKNESS**.

How was that?

CP: Killer.

JH: Yeah it was great.

CP: England, Scotland and Wales are something to behold. We hit the right tour at the right time because they were just starting to blow up.

How did you go over with their crowd?

CP: Mostly their core fans were into it. They got so popular that all the ven-

ues had to upgrade and that's when the top 40 crowds bought all the rest of the tickets. The top 40 crowds didn't like us so much. We got one or two bottles thrown at us (laughs).

How do you feel about the comparisons to **THE DARKNESS?**

CP: Well I wouldn't agree with that musically, but I would agree with the approach I guess, with the retro rock and metal thing.

JH: I think that we are both trying to rekindle a bygone musical era.

CP: Stylistically we are an **IRON MAIDEN**, **JUDAS PRIEST** influenced band and they've been classified as a **THIN LIZZY** or **QUEEN** influenced band. They are coming from a classic rock standpoint and we are coming from a metal standpoint.

But you don't mind being compared to them?

JH: I guess it depends on the context.

CP: I don't mind it. I think they are a great band and it was an honor to tour with them.

Some people question their sincerity doing the retro-rock approach. There will undoubtedly be people questioning your sincerity as well.

JH: Oh we've faced that all the time. Not so much anymore, but when we just started out.

CP: No one ever came up to my face and said you guys are a joke. But it was more mutterings and e-mails. It's no big deal. But I understand **THE DARKNESS** because they are mocking classic hard rock and making a joke out of it.

But you guys aren't?

CP: No.

So you would consider yourselves "true metal" as the saying goes?

CP: We are married to metal.

JH: Yeah (laughs).

Then you would consider your influences to be metal bands from the eighties?

JH: I think IRON MAIDEN from the early days, and they still remain our biggest influence. We've gotten comparisons to so many bands; it all depends on who asks. Someone either mentions a band and we agree or disagree.

For me, the first bands I thought of were SANCTUARY and METAL CHURCH. Especially with Cam's high-end wails it reminded me of the old Warrel Dane shrieks from SANCTUARY.

CP: Wow that is the first time anyone has said that. I take that as a huge compliment.

JH: Yeah thanks, that is a good reference.

Cam: Usually we get IRON MAIDEN or ACCEPT.

No, I immediately thought Warrel Dane or Jason McMaster. He was in WATCHTOWER in the early eighties and later on was in DANGEROUS TOYS.

JH: Yeah right.

CP: Cool, thanks.

The name 3 INCHES OF BLOOD is rather unusual, what does it mean?

JH: That's how much fluid you would need to drown in.

CP: That's the bare minimum to drown in, but I don't think anyone has had any close calls when it comes to drowning (laughs).

The name itself reminds me of a hardcore band, which is ironic because some of the band members have a hardcore background.

JH: Yeah some of us.

CP: I played in hardcore bands in my early teens and then I got into metal. Punk and hardcore was easier to play at the time. I reached the point where I could perform metal and I met up with people who could play metal really well. Everyone started out listening to similar music and then we all met up in the same city.

Does Vancouver have a thriving metal scene like Montreal or Toronto?

CP: There are some good bands, but they don't get that much exposure. There are a few notable bands like STRAPPING YOUNG LAD and ANNIHILATOR. It's a regular thing to see Gene Hoglan down at the bar. He's always having a few drinks and talks to whoever comes up to him. I think having someone like him in our scene is really important. We opened up for them a while back. They were filming a DVD and it was a big ballroom venue and they asked us to be main support. It was the biggest crowd we had played to in our hometown.

What is the 3 INCHES OF BLOOD live experience like? I have visions of spikes and chains with lots of leather.

JH: It's not too extravagant. Mostly it's just the vigorous sweaty head banging.

CP: I've got a few arm gauntlets, but it's pretty basic.

So you don't go the MANOWAR route with loincloths or the ARMORED SAINT chain mail?

CP: We like the idea of weapons and armor and spikes and chains and bullet belts, but we don't over do it. It's metal so we need to represent.

You did a tour with the BLACK DAHLIA MURDER, who is vastly different from you.

CP: Those guys rule. We toured with them and HIMSA.

JH: The turnout on those shows wasn't as good; it was mainly a hardcore crowd.

Occasionally we had people yelling, "where's the breakdown"?

You worked with two metal heavyweights on the production side of the record in Neal Kernon and Colin Richardson.

JH: Working with Neal was fantastic. He was mellow, but he helped us through a lot of stuff. We didn't go over for the mixing process, but Colin did an excellent job.

CP: He would send us mixes every few days. We are very happy with the final results.

I didn't get a copy of the lyrics, but with a title like Advance and Vanquish and some of the lyrics I did read it would seem to be based somewhat on sword and sorcery kind of stuff.

JH: It's definitely got some ancient battlefield imagery going on in the lyrics.

CP: We wanted a title that would represent all the songs as a whole and I think Advance and Vanquish does that.

The song "Deadly Sinners" is great; it's downright infectious because it is so damned catchy. But I read the lyrics about "the mighty warriors of metal" and that sort of thing could be looked at cheesy.

CP: It would be nothing new to us.

JH: We've gotten that before

CP: We're not going to lose any sleep over it. There will probably be people who think it's the worst thing they have ever heard. There will be some people who hate it and some who love it, that's just how it goes.

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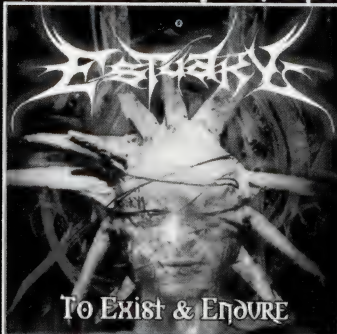
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JAG PANZER



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE CABRAL

JAG PANZER is a hard working band, considering that most of these guys have family lives, and they still manage to come up with great records. Their newest album, *Casting The Stones*, proves that point exactly. In fact this is one of the best metal releases of the year. If there's one band that consistently defines U.S. metal, JAG PANZER is it. Formed in the early 80's, then reformed in mid 90's JAG PANZER's history is full of events that in the end make this band so strong and vital. Guitarist, Mark Briody, talks about the new album, and other JAG PANZER related topics.

Pit: How are the fans reacting to the new album?

Mark Briody: Strange, honestly. I did a lot of European press. In places where we never did anything they love the record. But, in Germany, where we have our strongest market, they seem lukewarm about it. U.S. sounds positive. A lot of people say that it sounds nothing like JAG PANZER, and that we totally changed our sound. And the next phone call I take it says that it sounds too much like the other records. I'm getting conflicting opinions across the board, which I actually really like. It would be get me worried if everybody was saying the same thing.

What was going through your mind when you were getting ready for *Casting The Stones*?

Chris (Broderick) and I split the songwriting on this record. We talked about it before we wrote, and we wanted to make the album a little bit darker. We wanted to experiment with some different tuning. We wanted to make this record a little bit more guitar oriented. We didn't wanna lose sight of the Jag Panzer sound. It all had to be still recognizable as JAG PANZER. I think we achieved that. I can sing along to all the tunes, same as I can sing along to the rest of our songs. Another thing we didn't want to do this time around was have any violin, or choral arrangements. We wanted less acoustic stuff, and a lot more guitar harmony going on.

You've always had a very strong sense of melody, where is it coming from?

I think working with Harry (Conklin) because he sings all the time. When we were going to high school, my parents used to pull up chairs and listen to Harry, as we would wait for the bus. He would do Broadway tunes while waiting for the bus. He did it really well. He loves singing, and to this day he's always singing something. The other day I ran into him, and he was singing some Richard Marx tune.

Not to long ago you re-recorded all of your earlier work, what kind of feedback did that receive?

When it comes to *Ample Destruction*, the die-hard fans prefer the original. We knew that even before we re-recorded. There's an atmosphere the album has that cannot be re-created, but we did our best. I really tried to make it clear in the press that our hands were tied. Joey Tafoya (former guitarist) didn't want the original released, so we can't release it. In order for us to make these songs available again, we had to re-record them. I think people understood, and the album was well received.

NUCLEAR BLAST AMERICA

Canada's ANVIL is perhaps the best band you've never heard of. The reason why so many people haven't heard about this band is simple, their records weren't readily available in the States. This may change with the current, *Back To Basics*, being released on a U.S. label. The album itself is an excellent example of what a great heavy metal band should sound like. ANVIL has an impressive twenty-year history that's filled with highs and lows. The band made many interesting records that are worth investigating. Once you become a fan you'll know that you have to have them all. Vocalist-guitarist, Lips, talks about the new album, and the trials and tribulations of being in the band.

Pit: You seem to be releasing albums rather frequently ever since *Worth The Wait*?

Lips: Well, the new one just came out, and I already have nine new songs that need to be recorded. It seems like whenever we release an album, I'm already an album ahead in my writing. We went through the period of time when the releases weren't as frequent. We had bad contracts, and all kinds of other business shit that really screwed us up. We had situations where we couldn't leave a label, or we couldn't leave management, just crap. That type of stuff always slows you down. It's like you're ready to go, but no one else is. We're self-managed now, and we've been for many years. At one point we had the same managers as AEROSMITH and TED NUGENT, but they had better things to do than make ANVIL happen.

Back to Basics is a very strong album, in your opinion how do you view the record?

In our band circle, we think it's one of the best things we've ever done. What we did this time around is took all things we favored and put it on the ANVIL record. We went back and tried to look for the lost sounds of yesterday. In our



career we got to the point where we started using new influences, instead of old influences. In doing so, we became part of everything as opposed to being different from everything. And that's not how you make a name for yourself. At the end of the day you have to have something that's different. From my personal view I think that metal has deteriorated to a great degree. Sometimes it's hard to tell one band from another.

How difficult is it for ANVIL to maintain and get new fans?

That's a very good question because it's a difficult process. When you don't have a record label that will go to the wall for you, you'll be unheard of. We haven't had a proper record label that would pay for the tours, so people could see and hear about us. Those elements alone are what make the difference between "making it" and not making it. The music is a completely different story. The music could be as good as gold. If no one knows about it, it still goes unheard, and that's just the way it is. Having said that, the music that we have created could've been produced a lot better, and that goes all the way to the present, from *Forged In Fire* to now, if we had a big budget behind us people wouldn't have second guessed about some of the songs. Also, working with good producers who can take you to the next level really helps. I'm only capable of what I'm capable of; working with another good opinion would only benefit us. Our albums still sound good, we don't have a hard time getting that Anvil sound. What we have a problem with is certain application of vocals. And vocals are the most important aspect of the recording. They can make you or break you.

END

BY MARK KADZIELAWA

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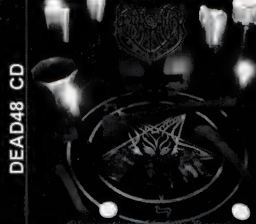
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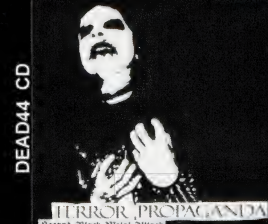
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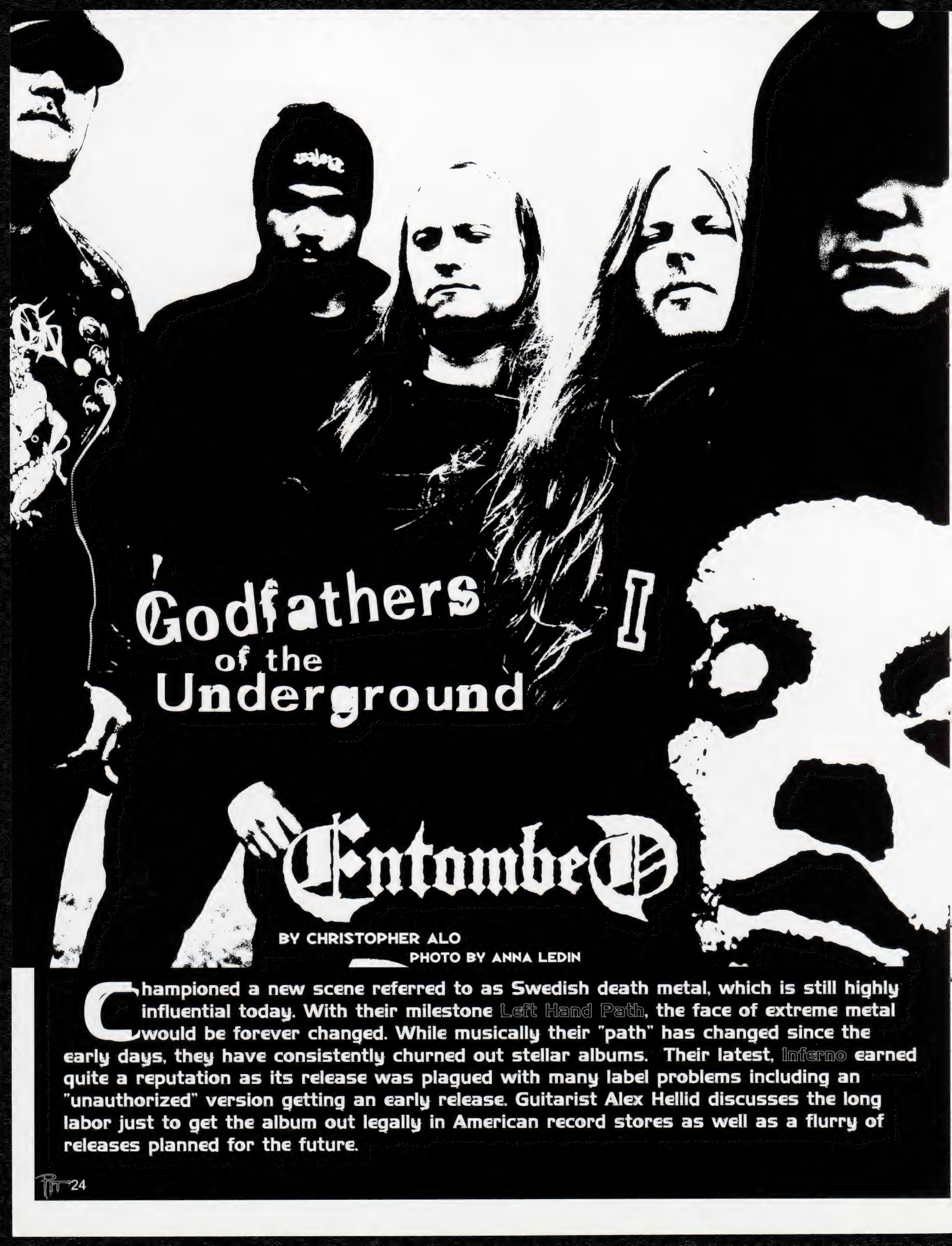
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Godfathers of the Underground

Entombed

BY CHRISTOPHER ALO

PHOTO BY ANNA LEDIN

Championed a new scene referred to as Swedish death metal, which is still highly influential today. With their milestone *Left Hand Path*, the face of extreme metal would be forever changed. While musically their "path" has changed since the early days, they have consistently churned out stellar albums. Their latest, *Inferno* earned quite a reputation as its release was plagued with many label problems including an "unauthorized" version getting an early release. Guitarist Alex Hellid discusses the long labor just to get the album out legally in American record stores as well as a flurry of releases planned for the future.

Pit: Inferno shows the thicker, sludgier CATHEDRAL like side of ENTOMBED as compared to the thrash like SLAYER influenced Morning Star.

Alex Hellid: We really didn't have a plan on this one. On the last one we wanted to go ahead and make a straight metal album. On this one we felt like we got a bit of everything. But there are a few doom tracks, which is the new element. We felt like we were doing a darker album, not so happy and upbeat. There is some metal stuff and a little bit of the punk side, but the doom thing was new for this album.

Some people have referred to this as your stoner album?

I haven't heard that one (laughs). But everyone should make a stoner album (laughs).

The album is finally out in the U.S. via Candlelight Records after many delays and problems.

The thing was we licensed all our stuff from Threeman Recordings to Music For Nations in Europe. They assumed that they had the American rights, but they didn't. MFN had a deal with Koch Records in the states and they just passed it along when we sent MFN the masters. Before we knew it was in stores. It was out in America before it was out in Europe or the rest of the world, which has never happened before. As it happened, everybody in Europe starting importing the Koch version, which was very bad. The American version was out two months before the European release, which then pissed off our European distributors. Everyone was pissed off including us. It looked like we were going to have a simultaneous release both stateside and over here but it came out in America first. It kind of came out as sort of a bootleg (laughs).

Is the Koch Records version a different mix or anything?

No, the music is the same as on the other discs. But the artwork isn't the same. They tore out a few pages from the booklet and made the artwork look worse. It really just fucked everything up for us.

The Koch Records version was then "recalled" and it was announced to the press that you signed with Century Media Records.

Yeah we were so close, I'm sure that would have been fine too. The people at Century Media were great to us. We went with a company over here for the European distribution and so we went with their American distributor, Candlelight to make it easier. The Century Media people were really geared up for it. But I never experienced anything like that. We thought everything was under control and then out of the blue they release the album two months in advance.

Well ENTOMBED has its share of record company problems ever since splitting with Earache. Are you cursed?

I think so, yeah (laughs). That's why we decided to see if we could do it better ourselves with Threeman. We have the same distribution that we had before so now there is nobody we can blame but ourselves.

The last couple of albums have been really difficult to get in the states.

In America it's a joke. We are going to try and get all the other albums and release through Threeman and have it distributed by Candlelight.

So which albums are you re-releasing then?

Morningstar, Uprising, To Ride, Same Difference and Sons of Satan. There are like five albums that we really want to get out. I guess the last album you could really find in America was *Wolverine Blues*.

Yeah and that was a long time ago.

That was 1993 or 94. That was a long time ago. **Will the reissues have bonus tracks or be remastered?**

I'm sure we will find something to make it worthwhile. We have a few things planned. Now we have the *Inferno* album and this fall we are going to start working on new stuff and try and record and finish the album before the end of the year. Then we have the live album coming out, *Unreal Estate*. It's the best live recording we have ever had. Then there will be the DVD version later. There are songs that we don't normally do live and there are some different arrangements. It might not be for everyone, but if you are a fan you might want it. We want to get the DVD out before the end of the year too.

Sounds like there will be a lot of new ENTOMBED products coming out.

We have a lot of other stuff that people keep asking us for. Like the old demos and stuff. Everybody wants to hear them so we are going to release them once and for all and make them available to whoever wants them.

Then the old NIHILIST demos will actually be available?

A lot of people ask us about getting them on vinyl, with nice packaging and the best possible quality. I just hope we have time for everything without making it seem like we are trying to milk the fans or something. We just want to make these things available.

If Unreal Estate comes out in January, when will you have the new studio album out?

We are thinking March or April. As long as we can have enough time to properly promote it, we have to work everything out with Candlelight still.

How did the whole concept for Unreal Estate come about? The thought of ENTOMBED playing at an opera house surrounded by ballerinas is pretty strange.

It was a really strange experience, but also a very pleasant one. We've been doing the album, tour thing for ten years. Two people approached through the website about doing songs for this ballet. We went and did a meeting with them expecting there to be hidden cameras or something. I mean it had to be a joke (laughs). They explained the idea of not changing our music and not having us play with an orchestra. It would be 35 dancers and us and if we said yes then they would pitch the idea to the opera house. The opera house is very conservative, it's for classic ballet, and you don't bring in death metal (laughs). They came back to us with a yes and that was when we were nervous. It could have been so bad.

It could have been disastrous.

For sure. But we got really good reviews. A 94-year-old woman with a season pass to the opera house came back four times and loved it. A lot of our friends who had never stepped foot in an opera house came down to. It was nice to watch and listen to.

Who was in the audience? ENTOMBED fans or opera fans?

It was like a mix. They have people who get a season pass and go all the time. So half the audience was there because they like to see shows. We were on this hydraulic lift. We started down low and by the end of the set we were up high. The people in the front row were really, really close to us. L.G. was screaming a foot away from someone's face (laughs).

Did you have to rehearse a lot with the ballet dancers?

Yeah we rehearsed for weeks. The whole experience was really good for us. We never had that discipline before. It starts with L.G. playing a grand piano three-minute piece with one dancer. Which he never did before, they had to talk him into it. After that it the

set kicks in with all the different scenes and things.

Back in January longtime bassist Jorgen Sandstrom left ENTOMBED. How did that affect the band and why did he leave?

We really haven't been touring that much for the last few years. We toured for like ten years straight up until the year 2000. We toured like four months straight for *Inferno* and he just got married and he just didn't want to be on the road that much. It's always sad when someone decides to leave. But when someone is feeling that way, it really is the best time for them to leave. We've got Nicko who worked as an engineer with us for a few albums and he is a great musician. He had just quit TERRA FIRMA his band, so he worked out great. He's starting to write material with us now, so it might sound different from the stuff that Jorgen did.

Any idea what direction the next album will take you?

Not sure yet. But I would want it to be in between *Morningstar* and *Inferno* production wise. On the last album we tuned down a bit and recorded live so it's a rougher sounding. It gives it a less clean sound.

The rougher production suits the dirgier songs on Inferno.

Well for some people it was too rough. It will be in between the two. We always like having our albums sound different. That's why on *Inferno* we did it totally different than we did on *Morningstar*. We don't want it to be boring. First we did *Left Hand Path* and then *Clandestine* and people ask, well why doesn't the new album sound like the first one? Why doesn't *Clandestine* sound like *Left Hand Path*? Then we did *Wolverine Blues* and that really confused people.

There will always be a certain number of ENTOMBED fans that no matter what you do, they will never be happy.

I know (laughs). But it almost seems like it takes them a while to get used to it. Then we give them something else to get used to. Maybe it's not the best thing to confuse people all the time. But I think if you do more than three albums you always need to not repeat yourself.

You have quite a busy agenda between the live album, the reissues and the next studio album.

Yeah I just want to make everything available. When you put so much into recording it should be available for people if they want to buy it. With Threeman being a real label we want to go back and get as much of the catalog as we can and make it available.

Did you ever think that you would make it this far and have such an impact on the scene?

No (laughs). I still remember when the first album came out I was hoping it would sell 1,000 copies (laughs). We were so into the tape-trading thing that we didn't even think of sending out copies to labels. Definitely when you look back at it I was like 14 years old. But even the former members of the bands are all still part of the family. We are still friends with (former drummer) Nicke Anderson and he is going to help dig up stuff for the demos.

Even though he has THE HELLCOPTERS he's still going to help you out?

Yeah, yeah for sure. I spoke to him and we are going to go through our basements and find as much things as possible for the fans. He's even spoken to Uffe about writing some music for the new *ENTOMBED* album. Uffe told him it's been a long time since he wrote some metal riffs. He probably won't play drums but you never know. We have done so many albums, so anything we can do to make it sound different is good. But I know I want to hear some new Nicke Anderson *ENTOMBED* songs.



Pit: The new album charted very high in Austria and Germany, the highest for any Metal Blade band ever, congratulations.

Johan Hegg: Thanks man, thanks a lot.

Were you surprised to be in the top of the charts with the new album?

I don't even know what to say, I can't believe it's true. Just today I heard we entered the charts in Sweden as well. We never really had a following in

is very vibrant and clear, but not too slick or over-produced.

That was what we were looking for. We wanted to get the instruments to work well together. We also tried to get a clear sound, but still be heavy and brutal. We didn't want it too polished it, I mean its death metal after all (laughs).

Speaking of death metal, your vocals have remained consistent in that they are still abrasive

For this album we had more ideas than we had for melodies than ever before, so it was a bit natural I guess.

Do you think you might ever try to sing in a clear vocal style yourself?

(Clears throat before answering) We haven't really talked about it. I'm not sure I could, I don't have a wide range with my voice. I have dark and darker (laughs). I can do high-pitched screams and growling, but I don't really have a normal voice. You could say that I'm a bass (laughs).

Some fans claim that you shouldn't be going in a more melodic direction. They feel that you are not as heavy as you used to be.

Well I guess we are still pretty heavy. But maybe we focused more this time on a dark mentality than we did on previous albums. But that's nothing intentional, that's just the way it happens. We don't try to force our creative process; we try to let things develop themselves. We go with what feels best at the moment. I think that genre of death metal has more to offer than just sheer brutality and I think bands like OPETH are living proof of that.

Fate of Norns continues the tradition of sword and shield lyrics for AMON AMARTH. What is it about the Viking legends that continue to inspire you so much?

Over the years it has sort of become a philosophy of life for me, the old mythology and legends have really inspired me in life. Maybe not to go out raiding and plundering (laughs), but still it's something that I feel I can relate to in an open and honest way.

The mighty AMON AMARTH rushes forth from Sweden yet again with a brand new album, **Fate of Norns**. Riding their steeds, with sword and mace in hand, the valiant Viking metal warriors are ready to pillage and plunder all who oppose them. Vocalist Johan Hegg sounds the charge on their latest conquest. Time to sound the victorious march yet again.

Sweden before, so it's crazy.

This album seems to be not far off from where you left off with Versus The World.

Well you always think, or like to think that your newest album is the best. I think it's a logical following to Versus. It may be a bit more midtempo or down tuned, but still in the same vein.

The production is a real standout. The sound

while the music has become increasingly melodic.

It's my style of singing, I can't really sing any other way (laughs). I haven't tried it anyway.

Well what caused the band to keep injecting melody into the music?

We always had the melodies I guess. For the last couple albums we strayed from that for Avenger and The Crusher, they were a bit more straightforward.

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What would you say to critics who say that you are limiting yourself by mostly writing on one topic?

I think in a way that would be pretty much true. It is difficult to come up with new topics and new angles to it. Sometimes I feel that maybe I am repeating myself. But in order to make the lyrics say something, you have to feel for it yourself. You can't just write anything and make it sound sincere. I have tried to experiment with different topics. On *The Crusher* we had a song called "Bastard of a Lying Breed" which was about the lawsuit brought against JUDAS PRIEST in the United States. I sort of try to use things happening around me or in the world in general and apply Viking metaphors.

The artwork for the cover is a lot simpler than the last few albums.

The idea is from the artist Thomas Everheart. We sent him the lyrics and the title and we explained it to him and gave him free reign to come up with it. He had the idea to make it a medallion or a shield. The main thing is that the Norns are the women on the cover and they represent the goddesses of fate. The chains

are their weaving the web of fate. The basic idea I really like.

There are some people who were put off by the artwork for the last few albums because they felt that AMON AMARTH might sound like MANOWAR because of the comic book style covers.

I know. I guess in a way it was a risk we took when we went for the cover artwork. We've always been misfortunate in that we didn't have enough time to get adequate feedback for the artwork. We always had to compromise a lot with the artwork. We never seem to learn from our mistakes. This time we decided to let the artist do it and get away from the MANOWAR-esque artwork. But I still think the other covers are kind of cool, it's pretty fun. It's making fun of the whole thing especially with *The Crusher*. We wanted something different and something new. I think the artwork is great and it looks even better on the vinyl version of the album, which is pretty limited.

Tell me about the limited version that comes with a DVD.

I'm not sure if that is available in the U.S. or not.

It's a 45-minute concert. It was filmed by three digital video cameras in Reykjavik, Iceland. It's a small stage and it's sort of a back to roots type thing. It's sweaty and crowded with a small stage; it was like sweat was dripping from the ceiling. It was just crazy, it was an awesome show. The people really liked it.

I had heard that there was another even more limited version that came from some German website?

Well that one website got a special on the new disc. With the first 1,000 copies it came with a signed promo photo of us. And it came shaped like Thor's Hammer. I think it sold out immediately, and I think it's up on EBay already (laughs). We have an instant collector's item.

I've seen you many times live both in the states and Europe, but it was just phenomenal to see you on this years Wacken festival. To see AMON AMARTH with a full light show and pyrotechnics in front of 30,000 people was quite a sight.

It was just intense man. We didn't expect that many people to watch us at the show because we came on at 2AM. I know when I am at a festival at 2AM I am passed out in some ditch. I was stunned to see that many people and to see so many people there was crazy.

I was surprised to see you on stage with all the fire and explosions.

Yeah if you have the opportunity like that you have to go for it. Fuckin' A (laughs).

You've toured the U.S. quite a bit in the past. When will you be over here to support Fate of Norns?

There's nothing planned as of yet, but we will get our asses over there. It's just a question of timing and of course getting the right deal. The "Gods of Metal" tour didn't work out so well, but the DEICIDE tour with BEHEMOTH was great. So was the NILE/KREATOR tour. We had a great time in the U.S. Playing on the NILE tour was the one where we had the most people coming out to the shows. We will see all the fans on the road as soon as possible.



Pit: I understand that **THE AMENTA** was formed from the ashes for several death and black metal bands in Sydney, Australia. Tell me about the demise of those bands and the formation of this one.

Chlordane: We formed as **THE AMENTA** in 2000 after our previous bands fell apart. The previous bands weren't as professional or as committed as **TA** so I think that their names are irrelevant. When our original bands split up we realized that most of what we were hearing from the international metal scene was stale and redundant. There were very few bands that were actually pushing the envelope and creating something new and exciting. We banded together to create music that was innovative, exciting and extreme. We abandoned all the typical metal techniques that we had learned in other bands and adopted a much more experimental and intuitive technique of songwriting. The first example of this was the *Mictlan MCD*, which we released in 2002. Our new album, *Occusus* is the first phase in our mission to broaden the boundaries of extreme music.

I couldn't find any information anywhere, even your website, listing the band members or the instruments they play. Please introduce yourselves to the readers.

The lack of information on the band was intentional. I think that having the band members named, photographed and dissected on a CD cover is unnec-

We definitely didn't want to be just a run of the mill death or black metal band. When we set out to write we just threw ideas around until we found the ones we like. Most of our songs come from experiments; it's very rare that someone actually brings in a riff for us to use. The industrial side of our music also came out through experimenting. We knew that we wanted to be an extreme band but we didn't just want to be the band that played the fastest or had the lowest vocals. To my mind that isn't extreme and it's been done. Shit like that is the safe option in metal and the safe option is never extreme. We decided that the next step in extreme metal was noise so we set out experimenting with our synthesizers and sound design programs to create the electronic noise that you hear on *Occusus*. I would describe our music merely as extreme music. It doesn't fit into the typical categories; it is neither black nor death. I find those genres too constricting anyway. When we write we never restrict ourselves. There are no rules and we won't be bound by anyone's conception of the description of our music.

You got a very powerful, bottom heavy, sound on Occusus. Certainly Lachlan Mitchell (Nazxul) had a lot to do with that. What was the process of working with Lachlan like? How important is he to the sound of THE AMENTA?

Lachlan is amazing engineer and also a good friend. He is great to work with because he really appreciat-

ed our experimental nature. We recorded a lot of sounds would cause a lesser engineer to run away screaming, but he took it all in stride and found a place for everything in the mix. When it came to mixing he was invaluable. We would suggest an idea and he knew immediately how to go about it. I think that he was very important to the sound of *Occusus*. With a lesser engineer it could have sounded muddy due to all the strange things going on in the mix. I think that he is one of the best engineers working in metal today.

I noticed that all of the song titles are one word ("Erebus," "Zero," "Nihil," etc.). Is this simply happenstance or is there a meaning behind it?

This was intentional. We wanted the whole album to have a cold and precise feel and we tried to continue this in the song titles. We also used one word so that people would have to think for themselves in terms of meaning and even pronunciation. Our album, conceptually, deals with the issue of people losing the ability to think for themselves, so we are trying to help the situation with our song titles.

I know that band biographies say all kinds of things, some accurate and some not - they may not even be written by the band in many cases. Still, I was curious about the statement describing Occusus as music for the modern age. Is there anything to this statement? The same goes for the statement about "...a new age in extremism."

I think we are definitely music for the modern age.

It has become increasingly apparent that the description of Australia as "the land down under" has less to do with geography and more to do with the hell fire and demonic metal of a slew of great bands. In this case, it's a suitable reference to the black/death/industrial sounds of Sydney's **THE AMENTA**. The band's full-length debut, *Occusus*, is an album chock full of soul slaying blackened metal and menacing electronic/noisy atmospherics. The band has found a niche that works and refuses to bow to trends, as Chlordane (keys, samples, FX) so proudly discusses.

THE AMENTA

BY SCOTT ALISOGLU

essary, cheap, and often detracts from the overall atmosphere of the music. We wanted to create a completely inhuman, cold and industrial recording and we thought that information on the members would humanize the music. However, our names are not a secret. Our current line-up is: myself playing keys, samples and effects, Cesium 137 (vocals), Ethion (guitar), Endrin (bass) and Diazinon (drums).

Does the music on Mictlan differ from what is heard on Occusus?

I still really love *Mictlan*. I think it is an awesome opening chapter to our music and stands up with any other release in terms of song writing, production and professionalism. With *Occusus* we took what we achieved on *Mictlan* much further. *Mictlan* was less industrial and had less experimental sounds and moments. Of the three tracks on *Mictlan*, one, "Nekuia," was an instrumental that was created from manipulated sounds such as breaking glass, strummed piano strings and gongs. Basically, *Occusus* took our industrial leanings further and combined the full on extreme metal of the other two tracks with the experimental soundscapes of "Nekuia." I think that *Occusus* is the more realized of the two, artistically speaking. It has a wide range of sounds and definitely pushes the boundaries further out.

Clearly a big part of the sound on Occusus is the mix of black metal with industrial, perhaps some death metal as well. Was it your intent to create a more blended sound from the beginning? How do you describe the music of THE AMENTA?



We are progressive and our music is a reflection of our frustration with modern matters. We don't sing of medieval times or dragons and weeping maidens like so many other bands. Our songs are about the modern disease of apathy. *Occusus* is a protest album and, unlike so many other albums, it is extremely relevant to our times. As for a new age in extremism I think that one is pretty obvious. We are not your usual band who wants to win the "heaviness" pissing contest. We know that true extremism is about challenging the listener. Nothing is as extreme as a new idea. We are one of the bands that believe in pushing the boundaries of what extreme metal can do. Thus, we are the new age in extremism.

What can we expect from THE AMENTA over the next year or so?

We are working on a film clip at the moment for the track "Erebus," which is the first track from *Occusus*. We are working with Entropy Films, whose full-length feature film, "Zero Tolerance Squad - State of Entropy", recently won Best Film, Best Director and the Jury Prize at the Fifth Planet Indie Film Festival in Toronto. It should be pretty amazing. The song is an intense, distorted affair and the video is going to reflect that chaos. At the moment we are also preparing for our first tour in support of the album. We are going to play the entirety of *Occusus* live, including all samples, effects and interludes. It is going to be awesome and I think it will blow people away!



Brain child of youngster Phil Taylor, you'll likely be hearing much more from **FUTURE LEADERS OF THE WORLD**, now assembled as a final (Ed-is anything final these days?) quartet that includes Taylor along with Carl Messina, Bill Hershey and Jake Stutevoss. Taylor is pleased with the results on many LeVeLs. Epic Records signed FLOW in 2003 and the band began writing and rehearsing songs destined for LVL IV, their debut album. They're now on tour and we are likely see much more, for many years to come, from this talented group.

Pit: I've listened to the new album, and I'm impressed. So... let's start off with the history of the band... how did you get started and what got you to this point?

Phil Taylor: I went out to San Fran, and my arrangement to go live out there didn't work out, so I was homeless for a period of time, and I had to go to school and work full-time without having a place, and I didn't want that to last too long [laughs], so eventually I got a place. I couldn't get a band together in San Fran the way I wanted to, so I had to go to L.A. to try to get a group together. Eventually, I recorded a demo out there; it was just me and an acoustic guitar, and I got it backstage to somebody who knew [someone at] a record label and eventually it gave me enough money to record a real demo in a studio, not just me and an acoustic. So, we did that—had a full band and everything—I wrote the guitar parts, but we had some other people come in on the demo—the guy who plays drums for ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT and the bassist from Fiona Apple's band. I eventually ran out of money so I went back home to Buffalo and then got a group together. During that time, the guy who got the money together for the original demo was shopping it around, trying to get us a record deal, and eventually we got it to Epic, and that got us a development deal. We went out to Los

ANGELES and recorded some new songs and we got signed.

We met our guitarist during the demo process, and he joined the group about two years ago. And then we wrote some new

material, went to Vancouver, made the record, and then went back to Los Angeles, and just kind of waited out to see what the label wanted us to do. Then we decided to get out of LA, and we moved to Chicago and played about four or five months there, and then we moved back home again, and they put a song of ours on the radio, and once [our label] decided we were doing good enough on the radio, they decided to give us some money [to tour.] So, now that the 'risk period' is over...

How did you come up with your name? Is it something that



PHOTO BY TRAVIS SHINN

you had in mind from the beginning?

Actually, we went through a bunch of different names. We didn't even have a name when the record was done. We wanted to call the band Twelve Shades of Gray—which is from lyrics on one of the songs. Then we wanted to call it LVL IV, which is the name of the record. Then, somehow, from a huge, group brainstorm, when we had to come up with a group name, because we had to set up a name for our legal copyright, I came up with the name, Future Leaders, and I was just yelling that off from like a list of names, and everyone seemed to like it. And, then I didn't want it to be just Future Leaders, because that could mean future leaders of anything—it could be future leaders of the third Reich or something, you know [laughs]. So, I was like, how about **FUTURE LEADERS OF THE WORLD?**

How was it working with GGGarth as a producer? He also worked with MUDVAYNE and CHEVELLE...

It was—do you want me to be honest? I would say that the engineer did most of the work, actually. GGGarth was the one who was kind of acting like he was just there because he was told to be there, that the label forced him to do this. Overall, he's a cool person. He did a lot of small things to help the record, but he didn't really have much of a job to do; I mean, everything was pretty much ready to go when he got there.



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Pit: Was there a lot of pressure from the label to try and top the success of *The Art of Balance*?

Brian Fair: There are a lot of expectations from them and there's a lot of nervous energy, but they didn't put any pressure on us as far as our material or our music. We actually completely isolated ourselves when we did this record. We didn't let anybody hear a note until it was done. Not management, label, nobody. It was just the five of us, our producer Zeuss, and our sound guy. I think maybe the UPS guy caught a riff when he was delivering a package, but that was it (laughs). The label felt we were a huge success before doing our own thing, so they really just let us run with the ball. They are just stoked. We didn't let the pressure get to us.

There are not many bands that do as much roadwork as SHADOWS FALL, how did you even have the time to do this album?

Well we tour constantly; we did 18 months on the road to support *The Art of Balance*. That record was written really randomly on a break here and a break there while we were on the road for *Of One Blood*. It was pretty chaotic. We were so torched after we finished touring for *The Art of Balance* that we just had to take some time to write and record and stay immersed in working on it. We had five months of that with no distractions, no random trips to Japan, no shows anywhere and it just felt great. But after a few months, we were just itching to go back out there. We've never taken a break that long. It was so long, I didn't feel like I was in the band anymore (laughs). Every night I just sat home and watched the Celtics play (laughs). Now we've been home for a week and I can't wait to get back out there (laughs).

So the extra "away" time was really necessary for the new record?

Yeah it was huge. We were a little nervous because we had never done this before, to sit down and write a whole record at once. We never said OK we need to write ten songs, because that's a lot (laughs). We didn't want to just throw everything together because we were rushed. But the songwriting just went really fast, we got to rewrite and demo everything before we got to the studio so all the bugs were worked out. There was no wasting time or money in the studio because everything was written and well rehearsed. We had a laid back vibe because we knew the record.

I take it that is how you will work on future albums?

Definitely. I don't think you can really focus on a record and be touring at the same time. We were a bit under the gun because we had studio time booked and a European tour booked, but it wasn't like we had to do the record in three weeks, which is how it used to be.

When we would take time off before, we were broke. We weren't making any money, so we just wanted to get back out on the road. By the time we went on the road after doing the record I was thrilled because I didn't know where next month's rent money was going to come from. We used to all have part time jobs, but we all had to give that up because no boss is that cool (laughs). Over the 18 months we were only home for a few weeks here and there. We love playing live and we love traveling. Taking the time off to record was great, but we are glad to be out on tour. We can never tour too much.

Lyrically SHADOWS FALL seems to incorporate positive messages, does that continue on *The War Within*?

This album is slightly darker because this was

a more introspective record. The end results by myself are usually very positive. When you are dealing with your own shortcomings or facing your own things from the past, there is some negative energy there, but hopefully the end result is positive. Every now and then too you need to write a song about unity and coming from the hardcore scene was always a big part of that.

Even though you have just released a new album, you have a few other releases coming soon, right?

We are officially finished with Century Media Records with this record but we are going to do a B-sides compilation for them. It's going to be in the future but it will be coming out. It's going to have all the Japanese bonus tracks and live tracks and some covers maybe. We have hours and hours of live tape. There is a live DVD coming out also. It's an actual full set coming out from this summer's tour that we filmed at the House of Blues in Anaheim. That's a straight up live video all from the same show with lots of camera angles. But then there will be another DVD coming out that's all the behind the scenes and chaos. We would have had it out already but we keep adding to it. We're not thinking about anything else though except the new record, we are totally focused.

At the same exact time SHADOWS FALL, LAMB OF GOD and KILLSWITCH ENGAGE all seem to be really taking off. Is there any kind of rivalry amongst the bands?

Maybe between our managers and labels but there's no competition between us. We've been friends with the guys in KILLSWITCH since we were in high school; we were all in bands together when we were growing up. It's good for everyone that we all seem to be doing so well and there's nothing better than going out on the road with friends.

We were all playing shows together, the same lineups at the small shows. Now

a few years later and the three of us are doing the MTV2 Headbangers Ball tour and we were selling out these big places (laughs). We looked out at the crowd and we were wondering "where the hell were all these people a few years ago" (laughs)?

Well where were all these people a few years ago?

I think for a few years people were afraid to try something with real metal because it was such a dirty word in the industry. If kids were buying into the quasi nu-metal that was on the radio, you know that if they heard the real deal they would be into it. All it took was a few Ozzfests to get these bands out in front of people. If you thought that GODSMACK was the heaviest band in the world and then you hear HATEBREED you are like what the hell (laughs). And kids respond to that.

The 2003 Ozzfest, which you were a part of, was the heaviest until this year's Ozzfest. Do you think that your participation helped paved the way for the ultra heavy 2004 line up?

There's no doubt that they noticed that bands like us, KILLSWITCH ENGAGE, CHIMAIRA and SWORN ENEMY who already had built in following are adding to a draw on the second stage. Instead of trying to roll the dice on a bunch of major label nu-metal bands they decided to get a bunch of bands that are actually selling records and actually doing something. This year kids are getting there really early and it's one of the best-attended Ozzfests yet. Last year it was great to play with Ozzy and Zakk, but to play this year with BLACK SABBATH and JUDAS PRIEST would have just been out of hand (laughs).



For the past few years the "metal is making a comeback" cry has been heard by many nationwide, but it looks like the tide is actually turning. LAMB OF GOD and KILLSWITCH ENGAGE both landed at the top of the charts and sold units in the first week that were only sold in dreamland a few years ago. But then SHADOWS FALL comes along and raises the bar yet again (Ed.-redefines where the bar goes in the first place). Their latest album, *The War Within*, landed at #20 on the Billboard Top 200 and sold an astonishing 40,000 copies in the first week alone. Not bad for a metal band that could only get gigs playing hardcore matinees a few years ago.

"Optimize: to make as perfect, effective, or functional as possible".

Although you won't find the word **MASTODON** anywhere in the definition (nor the mention "album of the year"), I can't think of a band more deserving of reaping such comparison. Jaw dropping musicianship matched with unparalleled timing acrobatics; it's excruciatingly clear that this melodious mechanism is quickly moving along to bigger and better things.

Running the musical gamut without hesitation, MASTODON will throw punk, metal and even a country riff into their craftsmanship. "It's very seldom that a riff won't make it or a part won't make it because whoever has put it together has already gone through the weeding out of thorns by themselves. Some of the songs get put together by all of us, but a song like "Blood And Thunder" was written in entirety by me. I went through four or five months of changing it around and the finished product got brought to the band like, "this is the deal and if you like it cool". I'll say, "this is where I've gotten the song so far and I like how it is right now, but if anybody has any input, it's more than welcome". I'm not going to say I know everything and the song is perfect or untouchable. The reason you work with other musicians is because you admire their talents and trust their ability to write songs and have ideas. As a band we're extremely democratic in the sense that we try and bounce ideas off one another".

Incessant touring will do wonders for any band but its not often that a group can leap the musical hurdles that MASTODON have on Leviathan. Straight nosed and pinpointing, the album is stripped of the excess in favor of breathing dramatics. "We wrote the record in a month or a month and a half and basically now at this moment we're starting to write the next record and we're all pocketing riffs. I have a Dictaphone that I hum riffs into or I'll call my answering machine and leave riffs so when I get home I have them. It's the same thing that happened when we went on tour for *Remission*. After a year and a half when we got back home and it was time to write the record we were like, "shit, we've got a month and a half to write a whole record, what are we gonna do", but it came really easy. I was like, "what about this riff or that one, lets pull out our bag of riffs and dump them on the floor and see which ones we want to keep and which ones we want to throw away". I sat up here in my office at work with all my tapes of riffs and just kind of started going through every single riff. I had another tape in another player I would re-record the riffs I wanted to keep on the other tape and tried to arrange them. It was a process but it was kind of half-and-half. We had some stuff in the back of our heads and then when it came down to writing, we pulled it together. A couple of songs came together at the last minute like "I Am Ahab", that one I wrote three days before we left to record, sitting on the couch watching "The Dark Crystal".

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MASTODON



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Behemoth

By Christopher Alo

As the calendar year is winding down "album of the year" talk is always brought up in the press. While December 31st is not far off, an absolute contender for the crown is **BEHEMOTH's DEMIGOD**. The Polish metal extremists have built upon everything they had previously on their last masterpiece, **ZOS KIAS CULTUS**, but have also eclipsed its predecessor with aggression and intensity. **DEMIGOD** is meaner, faster and more aggressive than anything they have released thus far. **BEHEMOTH** commander-in-chief Nergal sheds light on their new album and band members and also explains why he doesn't want **BEHEMOTH** to be known as a Polish metal band.

Pit: The sound on the new album is really sharp. Does that come from working with Daniel Bergstrand?

Nergal: Yes. We brought it to Dugout Studios to mix it with Daniel Bergstrand. That was Daniel's idea to make it an upfront album. Zos Kias was heavy, but a mellow, laid back kind of production. I wanted *Demigod* to be much more alive and in your face. This is the most brutal album that we have ever put out. There are more classic IN FLAMES melodies, much better vocal lines and solos. We improved in every way. This album is establishing the **BEHEMOTH** sound. In the future we will stick to this kind of direction for blending death and black metal, we will stick with the unique sound. I'm not saying we are an original band, but I think it does sound unique. I think we have finally established the sound of the band.

Demigod is far more brutal and faster than I expected.

Yeah, Zos Kias was a mellow kind of mood. It's a very good album; I like the album a lot. We wanted to achieve something that was the opposite of what Zos Kias actually was. We just wanted to do things from a different angle. The point for us is to put out a different album every time. There are so many bands out there that just fucking repeat themselves, you know? They all sound the same. Take MORBID ANGEL for example. The first three, you know its MORBID ANGEL. But each of the albums sounds totally different and this is what I like about it. Same goes for IMMOLATION, every time they deliver something fresh. I would like to have that kind of impression each time we come out with a next record.

The music as a whole seems much more intense. Inferno's drumming is insane; there are more technical guitar riffs, better solos, etc.

That's true. But we didn't really work that much on the album. We came back from the SIX FEET UNDER tour in December of 2003. We took one month off and started very intense rehearsing. So then we did the whole album in like three and a half months and then immediately we went into the studio for three and half months. It was a more spontaneous period and I think that is where the intensity comes from. We worked faster and more intense. By doing this you catch the moment and catch that spontaneous spirit.

How was it working with the new band lineup for this record?

It was very good. This was the first time that we rehearsed with a full lineup since *Satanica*. For *Thelema 6* and Zos Kias we worked as a trio. Novy was a session bassist and he would just join us in the studio and I didn't like that. But with *Demigod* we rehearsed with the full lineup and Seth prepared all his solos beforehand. He was very prepared and he will be going on the road with us. And Orion has the most solid bass lines we've ever had. First he learned the songs on guitar and then was making the bass lines from the guitar that he already knew. It made it more solid and it works perfect with the drums. I am happy. We are planning to do about 200 shows for the new album and we will be much tighter as a band when it's all over. If we survive of course (laughs).

Karl Sanders, from NILE, has recorded a guest solo for the song "Xul".

We've known each other for years. Karl is a big **BEHEMOTH** fan and I am a big **NILE** fan. I totally respect them and love them and we get along on a personal level. I sent him an e-mail if he wanted to guest on the album and he was totally for it. He put the song on his server and two days later, the solo was there. It was so fast and when I got the solo back I was totally astounded by his work. The solo captures so much emotion in it. It goes from atmospheric to bar-



baric at the end, where it just fucking shreds, I love this part (laughs). It adds another dimension to it.

Can you elaborate on the story behind the cover art? The mask that the figure is wearing totally reminds me of the professional wrestler Mankind from the WWE.

Really? I didn't know that. That sounds cool. Well, the title *Demigod* is supposed to be a manifest, it's not just another album title. I wanted something huge and I believe this graphic is just excellent. There are some different elements. On one hand it looks like a Christ like pose, and it works well with the title *Demigod*. But there is some Christian symbolism there, but it is not Christ. It is intelligent blasphemy, but it is not "cartoon". The person is holding the stick of Phoenix, which is the old Egyptian artifact of power, and the symbol on the stick is hieroglyphics from the occult. I love it. This mask that you see on the cover is actually real; I wore it in a photo session. I might wear the mask during one of the songs on the live set. I'm not sure if I can because it's heavy and very uncomfortable, but it looks killer. It might give us another tradition. And we might use different kinds of masks on each album.

I know that you recorded several bonus tracks during the Demigod sessions for possible later use.

Yeah we did some bonus tracks, but they are not completed yet. There is a DANZIG cover of "Until You Call On The Dark". I love it. I love DANZIG. We also re-recorded some of our own earlier songs. We did one song from *Grom* and one from *And The Forests Dream Eternally*. They might come out, but sometimes people complain about mini-albums and ep's so we might not do them at all. I'm just fed up with the complaints. We leave to start the tour in mid October but we won't be back home until June. We are planning to tour for one year or two years, so the songs might not be finished. I don't know there is no plan for them yet.

The Polish metal community keeps growing and growing with yourself and VADER leading the way. How do you view the expansion of the Polish metal scene?

To be honest, I don't even want to be considered another Polish band. I like when people see us as another European band. Especially when we go to US. It's not that we are ashamed, but I think saying we are **BEHEMOTH** from Europe gives us more meaning. When they are hearing we are from Poland, people might automatically think of the 20 or 30 death metal bands from Poland. But we are not just another death metal band from Poland; this is a fact. We have a different sound. These other bands are great, but I just don't see **BEHEMOTH** as another death metal band.

Novy, your previous bassist left BEHEMOTH

to join VADER. From that and the fact that you are the two biggest Polish metal bands, is there any tension between the BEHEMOTH and VADER camps? And specifically between yourself and Peter?

No, no, I just saw the guys yesterday. We respect each other; there is no struggle between us. We are colleagues. We hang out with each other when we meet on tour. Novy just got a better offer from VADER and this is understandable. There are no hard feelings at all.

While BEHEMOTH is a band, it is very much your band. Are you a hard boss to work for?

Well I hardly ever compromise. I have my own ideas and my own vision. I want to have guys who will understand my vision. When they start thinking in other terms and they try to go a different way, then there is no way to keep it going together. We don't have fights or anything. Everything is clear, the rules are so clear. You are in or you are out. I'm not the easiest person in the world to work with because I am very demanding. I work on this band non-stop and so I demand dedication from the band members. If it works then I am the best guy for them, but if they fuck up, then it's not going to be that nice anymore (laughs).

Stylistically, your music walks the line between black and death metal. There are fans of both and then there are those who oppose cross mixing of the two genres. How do you feel about that?

Well as many people as you ask each will have as many opinions. People say we should be this or that, what can I say? Fuck, who knows better than **BEHEMOTH** what **BEHEMOTH** should sound like? Some people accuse us of going commercial. And I'm like, what does that mean, you know? How is that possible? How can we be that extreme and be commercial at the same time? This is not pop music. They say you should be black metal because you betrayed your roots. So you mean even if I didn't feel like continuing with this pure black metal thing, I should stick to it anyway? Would that be less commercial? They have no clue, they know nothing. But it is their right to have that opinion.

You have a US tour coming up with SUFFOCATION?

This is going to be the first part of our US tour. Century Media has already told us that we are going to come back at least three times. We love America. We did 62 American shows for Zos Kias and most of them were just great. In America, if you are not touring, you cannot get established. The feeling was like we were newcomers. After touring Europe for 12 years we are considered legendary. That bothers me because I am still a kid, I am only 27. But flying over to the US was just like wow! I just loved it. We are ready to kick ass now with *Demigod*.



Pit: *Congratulations on a great new album. I thought you perfected that kind of hardcore-inflected death metal sound. Are you feeling like it's the best INTERNAL BLEEDING album?*

Jerry Lowe: I definitely think it's the best so far. But you know, I grew up an INTERNAL BLEEDING fan, so I can't take away memories I have as far as remembering IB for what it was, like the first albums, the demos, how they were then. IB is one of those things where it could have went a long way, but then the production and everything was just shitty on the first albums and stuff. So with this it's like I don't really think the music changed much; I mean I think we tuned it in. Then on top of the fact that we got good production... It seems like we hit something that we've been doing for a long time.

Yeah, I was listening to Driven to Conquer and there's no mistaking that with Onward to Mecca it's the same band, but it seems like you hit the mark dead on this time.

Driven, that album's amazing, but no matter what

out with a lot of stuff, but we gave him engineering credit on the basis of him helping us keep our heads in the game while we were doing the whole thing. We went in there to kill, we wanted to just kill everyone.

I like Driven to Conquer, but I listened to both albums back to back and I think Onward to Mecca just flows better as an album. For some reason it's easier to listen to from start to finish.

I think the best explanation is that INTERNAL BLEEDING, even during the Driven to Conquer time, was more divided. With a band like ours, we talk a lot of shit; we have a very big message that we put out. With INTERNAL BLEEDING, everyone has to have their heads in the game. With Driven, it's an amazing album, but with Onward to Mecca we're the closest to being one-minded as a band on every level than we've ever been. That's important.

I noticed that only one of the nine songs, "Far Above You," has a guitar solo on it.

You know, that was written with a solo. With the other songs, we don't really set out to write solos.

INTERNAL BLEEDING

BY SCOTT ALISOGLU



Long-time soldiers in the New York Death Metal Legion, INTERNAL BLEEDING have followed up a good album, *Driven to Conquer*, with a great one, *Onward to Mecca* (the Alien Breed compilation was released between the two).

Fighting through many of the same obstacles that their NYDM brethren have faced, the band is now down to one original member (drummer Bill Tolley), yet has managed to create its best work to date. *Onward to Mecca* is an album powered with downright dangerous riffs and pulverizing rhythms, a sound mix that is clean and scathing at once, and one hell of a violent hardcore attitude, topped off with the throat shredding of Lowe. If you've not experienced the violence that is INTERNAL BLEEDING, then what better way to start than with *Onward to Mecca*?

it does you can't put that "oomph" into it; it just comes across thin. That's one thing, we wanted to keep that clarity and preciseness of *Driven*, but put in the punch that IB is known for live.

I love the dry guitar sound you got on the album. I know Terrance Hobbs of SUFFOCATION was the engineer.

I don't think it was so much Terrance's engineering. When we went in and recorded Frank [Buffolino, guitarist] — he's a perfectionist when it comes to our sound — he went in and recorded all the scratch tracks for the drums and everything. He didn't like that sound and when all the drums and stuff were done he went in and recorded with the new sound and then it was like he didn't like that sound either, so he kept tweaking things out. As far as Terrance's engineering, he was pretty much there giving us advice.

Kind of like a consultant.

Yeah, we gave him credit as an engineer on the basis that he was more like our coach. When we were in the studio, we were secluded. He did help

Solos are cool and I respect them for what they are, but at the same time, and not to sound like our music is beyond a solo because solos are great, and I do think the solo that we did really fits that song, but with our music a lot of the stuff is as good as it is without a solo. If you throw on a solo you might miss out on something else that we have going on. But that's the thing; that solo sticks out in your head. We really wanted to grab people with this album. We tried a lot of different things. Each song has something a little special in it.

Chris Pervelis and Bill Tolley were the only original members of INTERNAL BLEEDING, and now Chris is gone. Why did he leave?

When I came into the band, they were at that point where he was just providing, basically. For me, I was at the point where I changed my life around and made a lot of sacrifices to do this, so I'm either gonna make it work or I'm gonna die trying. Instead of being the driving force behind the band, as he had always been for years and years and years, he was

seeing something [in himself], in the path that we were going, becoming something that would eventually hold us back. He really was the bigger man and stepped down. He didn't hold us back and didn't lie to us. I'll respect him until the day I die for that.

The first thing that strikes you about Onward to Mecca is that album cover, the kid holding the gun and wearing the American flag over his mouth and nose. It's very in your face.

The cover is a picture I took about three years ago. It's my nephew; I think he was five at the time. It's because when you turn on the TV every day and the first thing they show you is Afghan children shooting an AK-47 and I just thought what a weird situation it would be if people saw American kids holding guns. That look in his eyes is just pure hatred. A lot of people think we're doing fucked up stuff over there and shit like that. How would you feel if you had to look outside and see your five-year-old kid shooting a gun because he had to?

The meaning of the title, Onward to Mecca seems pretty obvious.

The whole idea is we're sitting here waiting for them. I don't feel like a lot of the stuff we're doing is the right thing to win the war that we're fighting. I feel like rather than sitting here waiting for them to give us a few clues so we can stop the next terror strike, I think we should do another Japan where we send a message, "Don't fuck with us!"

Song titles like "Arm our Youth" really stuck in my head.

"Arm our Youth" speaks for itself. Being from Ohio, it's a God-given right to have a gun. Don't put your kids in front of a TV and let the TV teach the kids what a gun is for. You sit there and teach your kids how to protect everything you love. I know people are gonna say, "Oh, these guys are a bunch of fuckin' war mongers and shit like that, but death metal is supposed to be about war...bottom line, no fuckin' other way around it. The blast beats are sup-



posed to sound like machine guns, the vocals are supposed to sound like screeching, dying people, the music is supposed to sound like war, so if anyone wants to call us war mongers that listen to death metal, they're a bunch of fuckin' dildos!

Are you going to hit the road hard in support of this album?

I've told our record label that we want to have options before we even come home [from touring] to be back out with somebody.

WARNING: The band WHORE is not for everyone.

The music is an astounding blend of death, gore, speed, black, noise, and punk (got that?), while the lyrics are beyond hateful and offensive. Frontman Rob Fornicator (who you may know from the bands **FORNICATOR** and **MURDER BASKET**) spoke to Pit about working in a porn shop, the joy of writing graphic lyrics, and why women irritate him.

Pit: Wasn't your artist Mike Diana actually convicted on obscenity charges?

Rob Fornicator: Yes he was, and he also did artwork on the **FORNICATOR** CD as well. We played a show for the "Angry White Male" tour back in 2001 as **FORNICATOR**, and he was there as well as Jim Goad and some other people. I spoke with him and he sat at this table right in front of the stage and he was totally into what I was singing about. He also drew a picture of me that I have framed. It's killer!

Your lyrics define the term "misogyny." Why do you hate women so much?

Hopefully, this will make sense, but I doubt it. I don't really hate women; it's just that women irritate me—a lot. I have no patience for them in the real world.

Your lyrics don't read like fantasies.

Sometimes it scares me how close of a line I walk between fantasy and reality. On the **WHORE** CD we have a song called 'June 10th.' It's about this homeless chick that used to come into my work. One night, I saw her at about three in the morning when I was walking home. The next day I saw on the news that she was strangled just four blocks from where I saw her. My girlfriend tells me that if the cops ever read the lyrics to that song they'd think that I killed her.

Which song on the CD do you think is the most graphic?

"Super Slut." I manage this porn store and there was this guy that used to be the janitor there. Well, he would always hang out at the store in the arcade. If you don't know what that is, it's a place where you go and put money in the machines and jack off while watching videos while inhaling rush or sticking stuff in your ass or what not. In booth number 12, or his 'office' as he called it, he would leave all these notes laying around about how he liked to suck big black dicks or how he would like them to cum all over his face and drink their pee. One of his notes said that he was a 'super kinky bi-guy super slut.' I wrote the song from his point of view, so most 'metal' people who read that will probably think I'm gay.

Do you ever have any regrets or second thoughts about what you're saying, especially in light of the conservative times we live in?

None. I have no time for regrets. I do what I have to do and move on.

Briefly bring us up to speed on how WHORE evolved.

WHORE started in early 2001, but it was originally going to be a noise project called **WHORE ANIHILATOR**. I only did that for a few months and quit. I asked Neil Jones (**LORD GORE**, **FRIGHTMARE**) if he wanted to start up a band. He said yes, and **WHORE** was born. Due to crazy deadlines, we rehearsed, recorded, mixed, put all the samples together, and did the layout and artwork all in only a month and a half.

The CD has a raw tone and an old school death metal vibe to it.

We actually recorded the CD in our jam space and that's why in some review people say it sounds raw. But you know that's how I wanted it to sound. It's supposed to match the style of the lyrics and the older metal bands that have that rawness to them influence us. What's the point in having sleazy lyrics but then have a super pimp rock star recording?

BY JON "K" KONJOYAN

MORBID RECORDS



WHORE

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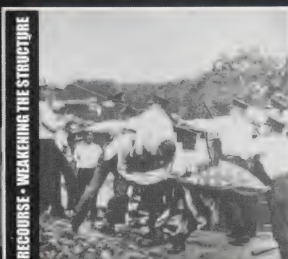
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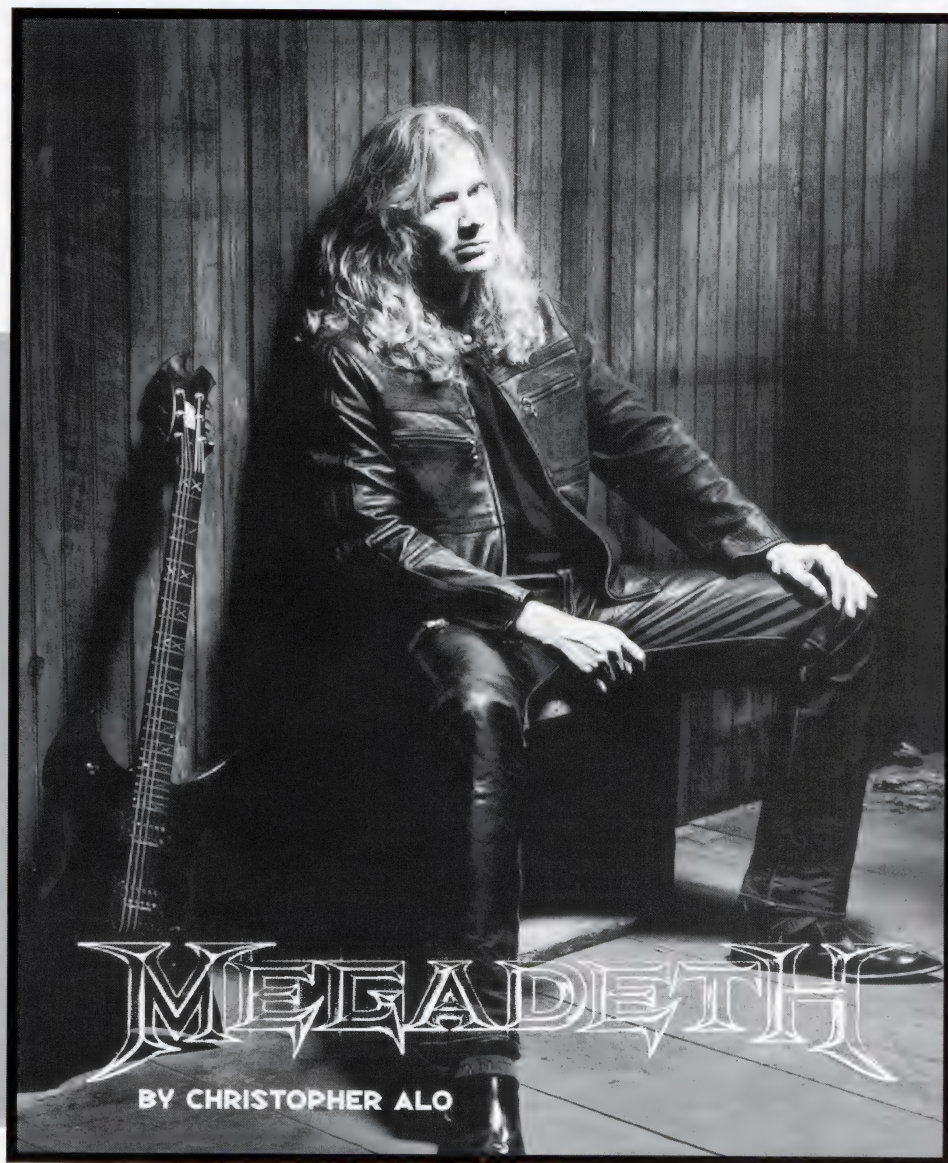
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For the past two years, it's been all quiet on the MEGADETH front. Dave Mustaine announced that his arm was severely injured to the point of never playing guitar again and that the thrash titans were no more. Time passed during those 24 months and then slowly news began to surface that the wheels had been turning and "the general" had been plotting his return. Earlier this year came eight reissues of the previous MEGADETH back catalog, all personally remixed by Mustaine and digitally remastered with bonus tracks, new liner notes and photos. But that was just the appetizer for the main course of *The System Has Failed*, the first brand new MEGADETH studio album since the group was disbanded. The album continues in the Countdown to Extinction style of aggressive guitar riffing with Mustaine's now patented melodic vocals. Never one to pull punches, Dave Mustaine tells all about his former band mates, the new album, METALLICA, and his near crippling accident. The snarl is back!



Pit: *Maybe we could back up and go over your accident in 2002 that led to the disbanding of MEGADETH?*

Dave Mustaine: Well I fell asleep on it, that's the long and the short of it. I would like to tell you something very sexy or macho, but there's none to tell. As dull as that sounds, that's what happened (laughs).

So the nerve damage was so severe that you needed to disband MEGADETH to rehab your arm?

Well I don't really think that nerve damage had anything to do with the breaking up of MEGADETH. I think it just sort of brought everything to the surface. The nerve damage wasn't what broke MEGADETH up. I got tired of playing with guys who didn't respect me as a leader and they thought they knew better than me and they don't. I got tired of having to listen to people about playing their songs. After a while I was like, if you are such a great songwriter, go start your own fucking band.

Then MEGADETH would have ended at that point anyway?

Well there was so much pressure from management to do all these concerts and play this and that, that I was pretty much just blinded by everything. There was a time when it was pretty much fun to play in a band. I enjoy being a solo artist right now.

Even though this is a MEGADETH record, it's basically a Dave Mustaine record. It was pretty freeing to go into the studio by myself and make a record by myself. I used session guys that were pro's and I didn't have to spend countless hours fixing performances by people who are good, but are not pro. When you go into a session, these guys are paid to play, that's all they do is record. There's a difference between recording professionally and being in a band, they are just way different.

Originally didn't you want to reunite the Rust in Peace lineup for System?

Yeah, but that was an early abortion. Nick was in, Marty was asking a lot of ridiculous questions and Ellefson just wanted to know how much money he was going to make. And it was just for them to play on the record, there was not going to be a reunion. I was pretty disappointed in Marty and Ellefson because this was something that had been so good to both of them. Marty was basically one step over homeless when I met him and put him on the map and if he denies that he is a fool. His career was already going downward and he was a nobody. Same thing with Ellefson. He was just a dumb farm boy and now they are rock stars. I doubt they are legendary. I doubt in a few years from now that anyone will even know who either one of them are. For them to have an opportu-

nity again to do something and for it all to be about the money was disappointing.

You wrote all the songs on *The System Has Failed*. Where they written after your recovery or before?

The majority of the music was stuff that I had written for a very long time. I kept music throughout my career and used it when it was appropriate. I actually started saving stuff in 1990 and just kept it on file. I had stuff saved on micro cassette, videocassette, floppy disk, etc. I even had stuff written out on sheet music, but the problem is that I can't read sheet music. I'm totally self-taught. I had to have someone help me figure out what I wrote, which was weird.

On the new album your vocal style seems to be reminiscent of the latter day MEGADETH material in that there is an abundance of melodic hooks. Was that the way you intended to go, to continue with that vocal direction?

The only thing that I wanted to do with this record was just put a knife in the ground and just stop all the gossip and nonsense. A lot of people were saying that MEGADETH isn't just Dave Mustaine, it's Dave Mustaine and Dave Ellefson, and that's horseshit. You listen to this record and it's full on Megadeth and it's all me. The fact is when I got hurt, those guys Ellefson and Degraasso and Petrelli thought that they

could go on without me and I was like who are you kidding? Granted **MEGADETH** can't go on without my voice but for them to put out an ad that states super group looking for vocalist? I was just like spare me, there's not a fucking songwriter in the group of them.

You didn't mind then doing your first record without Dave Ellefson?

Not in the least.

Was there a lot of pressure either from outside or from yourself to try and come up with another Rust In Peace or Peace Sells?

No, I didn't really worry about that. I went to the record company and the president of the company said to me, you know Dave you held the flag for heavy metal. You had the best riffs, you had the best lyrics, and then you walked away from that. And that kind of pissed me off a little bit. I had the guy who was the head of my label giving me a little spanking. He said I want you to make this record for yourself. Don't write it for us, don't write it for the press or radio, write it for yourself. He said it's time for you to get your flag back. I had been dying to write a metal record that's all kick your face in kind of stuff. Problem is with the guitar playing. I can always revert back to real heavy guitar playing, but that took a little doing. When *Risk* came out I told the guys we have to go back to our roots, and so I made *The World Needs A Hero*. But I knew that transition needed to be subtle. *Risk* was a pop masterpiece; it was just not a **MEGADETH** record. If it would have anybody's name on it other than **MEGADETH**, it would have been a huge success. The songs are great, they are powerful, and they just aren't **MEGADETH**. Going from that to *The System Has Failed* would have been to glaring. So *World* was definitely in the right direction. It was the bridge in between those two records. When I did *System* I said I have got the playing down, but do I want to go back to the singing style that I had when I did *Rust in Peace*? But I said no, I've matured as a singer and I've like what I have learned so I was playing at my best around *Rust/Countdown* and I think I'm singing at my best now. So far me to return to when I was playing at my best was kind of easy; I just needed to get my hand in shape. I had to take guitar lessons again. When my arm went dead, the nerve died. My hand was completely numb, you could have stuck a knife through my arm and I wouldn't have felt it. For four months I had no feeling whatsoever. After that I needed another year of physical therapy just to get the strength back in my arm. I hadn't picked up a guitar in thirteen months. I found a local guitar instructor named Rick Flauding who helped me get my confidence back. I think that

the solo on "Kick the Chair" is one of the toughest solo's I ever wrote.

"Kick the Chair" has a great solo and is a killer song. My personal favorite new track is "Back in the Day".

Everybody tries to say "back in the day" it was like this or like that. Telling somebody who is younger who wasn't there is like telling a virgin what an orgasm is like (laughs).

They will never know. And if you are a poser, I don't want you explaining what it was like. But back then, there was a sense of community; there was a sense of loyalty.

Since you did everything yourself with no constraints, is there a reason then that this was released under the name of MEGADETH and not Dave Mustaine?

Yeah, the publishing company that I am with is EMI Publishing. They said that they are happy that I am playing again and that they welcome a solo record, but that I owed them another **MEGADETH** record. If I didn't give them another **MEGADETH** record than they would have owned me forever and forever is pretty long (laughs). I felt if I don't do this now, I might never do it again.

So will this be the final album you do under the MEGADETH name?

Yeah. This is the last **MEGADETH** record.

Do you think that you will be able to do something under the name Dave Mustaine that you couldn't do under the name MEGADETH?

I don't think so.

How did former guitarist Chris Poland come back into the fold?

He was basically just a session guy and there's not much more to say than that. He will not be touring with us.

Some months you said that there would be a very limited number of tour dates to support the new record. Is that still true?

Well it depends on how the tour goes. Originally it was just going to be a few dates, but if the tour is successful and the record is successful, I'm not going to deny playing more shows. The tour starts in October and we run through North America. We'll take it from there.

The cover painting is very striking. It marks the return of band mascot Vic Rattlehead who is accepting payoffs from politicians. Where did the idea come from and weren't you going to use longtime MEGADETH artist Ed Repka to do the cover?

That was my idea. I talked to Repka, but he got weird with me. We talked about a price, but he is another ingrate. He was a college kid who I put on the map. He wasn't doing anything, we had him do one record cover and then every record cover after that he used the same exact paint that he did *Peace*

Sells with. He must've bought too much paint. THE **CIRCLE JERKS** record was done in the same colors. We talked and we had everything worked out and then he started jacking the price up. Then I said goodbye and this time it's forever. I got a guy named Mike Lerner to do it. A lot of people see Bush up front and think that I'm anti-Bush. But everybody is there. The Clintons, Arafat and Blair, the Arabs; nobody is guilt free. Even though Bush is waving his finger at Vic, what Vic stands for is so much deeper than anybody is on the cover. And the point of the cover is that you can get away with murder in America. You can buy your way out of it.

Speaking of politicians, it is an election year in the United States and that has many famous people endorsing presidential candidates. You did the opposite because you recently said, "musicians should shut the fuck up and play music because they don't know anything about running a country".

You see Al Jourgensen of **MINISTRY** going around saying fuck Bush. And I've always liked **MINISTRY** but I know that guy has a legendary drug problem so you can't really take what he is saying seriously. The United States is the strongest country in the world for a

reason. Now I'm gonna vote for Bush. I voted for Clinton, but I don't give a fuck because I vote for the lesser of two evils. Kerry is a mistake. He will ruin our country. But the fact that people would vote based on who a celebrity endorses is just stupid. Don't vote for Bush because I'm voting for him. Don't vote for Kerry because you hate me.

More celebrities should take your stance, but they don't.

Yeah you've got Tom Morello from **AUDIOSLAVE** walking around talking about freeing the people in South America while he is walking around in his fucking Gucci silk suits. Spare me, what do you know about that? Talk about hypocrisy. Natalie Maine from the **DIXIE CHICKS** said that she is ashamed to be from the state of Texas; well I'm ashamed that you are fucking from America. I saw her at a Nashville Predators game, talk about somebody who needs to go on a diet. I don't know if she was pregnant at the time, but she sure looked it. But the fact is unless you are a politician, shut up. What do they know about politics? (With a southern accent) Oh well I'm gonna vote for a guy that gonna raise taxes on the fucking rich. You stupid twat. You are in the upper income bracket in America, you are gonna get

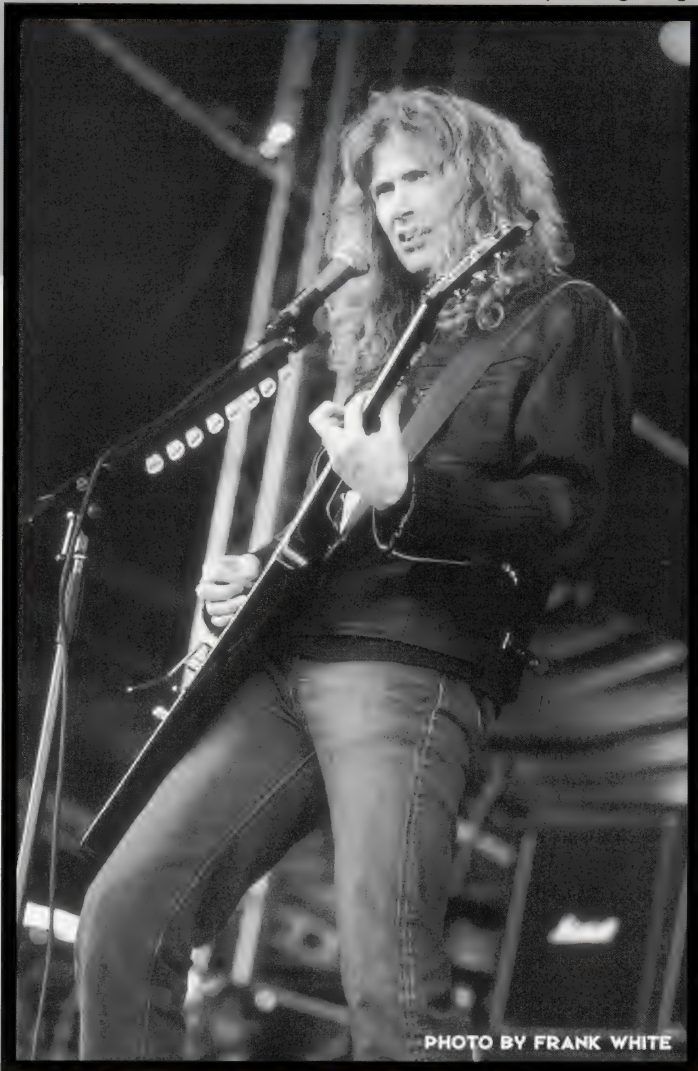


PHOTO BY FRANK WHITE

taxed. And when small business owners get taxed, jobs are lost. How stupid is that? You don't know what the fuck you are talking about shut up.

I know you weren't happy with the footage of yourself in the METALICA documentary "Some Kind Of Monster", but I was wondering how you felt as a musician of METALLICA's current musical direction?

I don't listen to them anymore and I haven't listened to them for a very long time. I wouldn't even know what they are doing. I heard their last song on the radio and I was pretty surprised that it was them. I would have listened closer if I knew it was.

I've talked about the movie enough. I wasn't happy about it. They know it. They used my footage and I told them not to. I'm not going to be talking to Lars ever again. That's basically the long and the short of it. After a while, you just kind of ask yourself if I was so unimportant and such a temporary, shitty guitar player for so many years and with them ignoring the fact that I even existed, why is it so important that I'm in the movie?

Right before the new album was released, seven of the previous MEGADETH records as well as the side project MD. 45 were all re-released. Was that to wet everyone's appetite for the new CD?

I don't know why the label did what they did with that, but I know I worked on trying to get things right with those albums. When you work with the right people, good things happen, and I'm working with good people right now. After a while you make unne-

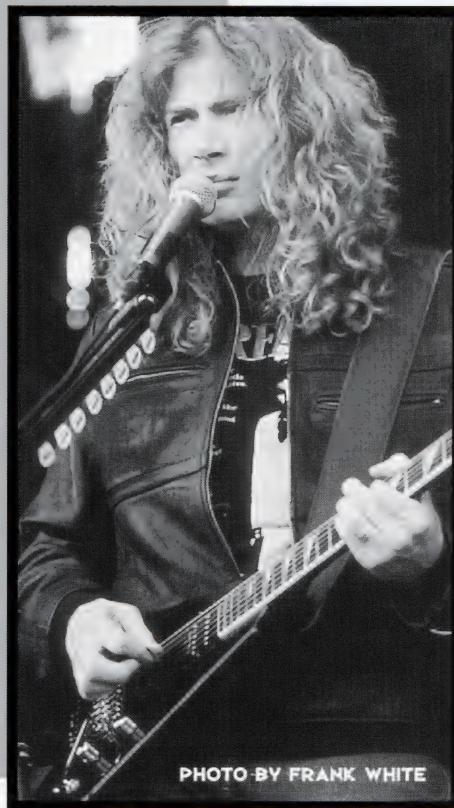


PHOTO BY FRANK WHITE

cessary mistakes. Either you do things the right way or you do it the wrong way.

Well it sounds like you've been cutting loose the wrong people in your life.

I would say that is probably very accurate (laughs).

The reissues were fantastic, but I wanted to ask you about the first MEGADETH album, Killing Is My Business. What ever happened with that album?

Well it wasn't reissued because that was put out on Combat Records and not Capitol. But what I think you may be talking about is that company just disappeared. We can't find it. If you can't find the people to pay them, there's no way to get more on the shelves.

There couldn't be a better time to be a MEGADETH fan and you seem very enthusiastic to be active once more.

I'm just really happy to be playing again. With the people that I've chosen to work with me I'm pretty confident that they are going to be as good as anybody that has ever played with me before. I at least know that the bass position is summed up and is going to be as good as or better than Ellefson ever was. With the guitar playing there are so many different types of guitar players, but they are going to be equally addressed. We do have a little time to get everything prepared and I am a perfectionist and I want to make sure that everything works out so that the fans get the best show that they can possibly see. If this is going to be the last tour, I want to make sure that this is the best show of the entire life of MEGADETH.



I have heard "YOB are not a great doom metal band, nor a great metal band. They are a great band, period." TOOL is one of their biggest fans, and now Metal Blade Records have signed the Eugene, Oregon based trio and just released their critically acclaimed major label debut, *The Illusion Of Motion*. For more on this eight-year overnight success story, Pit spoke with vocalist/guitarist and founding YOB member Mike Sheidt.

Pit: What does YOB stand for?

Mike Sheidt: We pulled the name from a Chuck Jones space cartoon from the 1950's where Martians call an earth child "yob," or "boy" spelled backwards. Ultimately we wanted a name that wouldn't paint us in a corner. We have since found out that in the U.K. yob is a punk or a thug, and in Russian, yob means "fucked."

If you could describe the sound of YOB to someone who had never heard it before, what would you say?

Mix SLEEP with NEUROSIS, ELECTRIC WIZARD, RUSH, SABBATH and FLOYD, and then inject the mix with metal.

Your roots are in punk and metal, from MOTORHEAD to MAYHEM. Explain how a CATHEDRAL show changed your musical point of view.

I went to see NAPALM DEATH and CARCASS on the Gods Of Grind Tour and CATHEDRAL was on the bill. I expected nothing from them but they completely blew me away. They were so fucking slow and heavy. It was right before *Soul Sacrifice* came out and I was changed permanently. I discovered SLEEP and ELEC-

TRIC WIZARD shortly after that and the rest is history.

I hear raves about your new CD like "The sound is amazing..." and "The atmosphere is what makes this album so great." How difficult was it to get that sound?

It is difficult in the sense that we work really hard to make our songs the best we can. That being said, we have become a stronger band in the studio from production to individual performances. We are much more in control of achieving what we want to hear than ever before.

The track "The Illusion Of Motion" clocks in at 26:10. Did you set out to write a long piece, or did things just evolve that way?

That is how the song came out. I actually tried shortening it at one point and it didn't sound right. It needed all that space to occupy in order to be what it wanted to be. Sometimes I'll try to write a certain type of song but in the end the best results happen when I stay obedient to what presents itself on it's own.

You've said that when it comes to music, "Originality isn't important. Honest feelings are important." Care to elaborate?

There are no absolutes in metal. Death metal keeps being reinvented over and over again. What bands like BEHEMOTH, NILE, and GOLEM do isn't so different from what MORBID ANGEL, IMMOLATION and BOLT THROWER did ten years before. The vibes of these new bands are fresh and sincere. DARKTHRONE haven't changed their formula over the years as much as they have kept the feeling alive and new. Metal keeps getting dissected and reassembled into all these new exciting bands and forms, but the building blocks haven't changed. I think the first time people heard bands like SLAYER, BLACK SABBATH, DEVO and the like, their minds were completely blown. It was original. EMPEROR did something like that with the *Anthems* record, and AKERCOCKE have had that influence on me, not to mention KHANATE. But I am just as turned on by bands like GRAVES AT SEA who aren't necessarily original but their feeling and vibe are so real and genuine.





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Norwegian Black Metal with the dark ancient feeling. Blood, darkness, cult. Features Nocturno Culto of Darkthrone on vocals and Hellhammer of Mayhem on drums.

Glenn Danzig's career has been amazing so far. Not only is he a cult artist, but he also is still vital to the scene like an enormous, darkened, pumping metal heart, as he continues to release quality records. **DANZIG's** latest, *Circle Of Snakes*, is no exception to the rule, exploring the darkest corners of Glenn's mind.

Pit: When listening to the new album one can't help to notice how much things changed musically since the first **DANZIG** record.

Glenn Danzig: I would have to say that our first record was very stripped down by Rick (Rubin), and was very raw sounding. There wasn't much production or engineering on it. So, it was very raw. I think we started to put more vibe into each record, and they kept getting darker and darker. That's when

any un-recouped money they spent on you. So, if let's say you want to get out of the contract and form a new band, they can still hold you back as a new artist, and hold claims against that new record. So, I'm lucky because I started my own label back in the day, and I have experience. Unfortunately, a lot of other labels don't have that experience, but it's something worth looking into.

Being involved in the scene for over twenty years, how would you say the record labels changed over that time?

They changed alot. When I first started it was very limited. I would bring some recordings, and the label would say its noise. Of course they weren't used to something like the MISFITS, who wouldn't take no for an answer. So, what we did with MISFITS, we put out our own records, and proved everyone that people wanted to hear this type of music. After that the labels were willing to sign bands like us. By the time **DANZIG** was getting signed the whole underground scene was already well developed, and the labels were more open-minded. Now, just about everyone can get signed, but be cautious. Make sure you read that contract very carefully.

Again, after being involved in the music business for so long, do you ever get bored of it?

It's never boring on stage. When you interact with your audience, your fans, that's never boring. Getting the feedback from the people after each new record comes out, when they tell you what they like. Some fans are very vocal about particular songs, what it means to them, or

how it changed their life. That's the good part. The boring part is sitting on the tour bus, and driving sixteen hours to the next show with nothing to do. Sitting in hotel rooms with nothing to do. That stuff gets boring.

What was it like to write a song for Johnny Cash few years ago?

You know, I've just been approached by a documentary show about Johnny. It was an honor for me to write a song for Johnny. When I was approached to write a song for him, I immediately agreed. He's somebody who's musical career I really respected,

and as a performer is a really good entertainer. He did it his way. He had a vision, and he stuck to it.

When you revived SAMHAIN for a tour, what was that like? Do you see it coming back again?

It was really funny. When we rehearsed, it was fun. But, going back on stage, it just brought back lots of good and bad memories, mostly good. We had a lot of fun doing it. It was a one-time thing. We were celebrating with the box set at the time, so it was very timely. It was really cool. I never say good-bye to SAMHAIN, I just moved on to other things. But, all the things I did in my past will always be part of me. It's just that I follow the natural progression.

Isn't it surprising that when new fans get into you, they often get to know you through MISFITS and SAMHAIN, and then eventually find DANZIG, or perhaps the other way around?

When I created the music of the MISFITS, SAMHAIN, and **DANZIG**, it was created not just to be the flavor of the month. It was meant for people to keep discovering over and over again. It was real music for real people, as opposed to something trendy. When I first met with Rick Rubin we had this discussion that I wanted to make traditional sounding records that people will keep discovering every five years or so. Sort of like THE VELVET UNDERGROUND, or AC/DC with Bon Scott. People keep discovering these records, and it makes no difference how old they are. What keeps them alive is the fact that they were good. I'm actually happy it worked out that way. I'm very happy that people keep discovering the old MISFITS, SAMHAIN, and early **DANZIG** records. I'm very happy at the stage of my career. I've been able to accomplish everything I wanted to do. I have no complaints really.

What would you say is the biggest misconception of Glenn Danzig?

Usually I get branded as being difficult, and hard to interview, and this and that. Usually I just give what I get. A lot of times if you take control of your life, and you're the one who is in charge as opposed to somebody else being in charge you upset other people. Either they can't do it themselves, or they're upset that they can't get to me. I'm always gonna be the person who decides what I do. It's never going to change.

I've been hearing rumors that you're getting into movies?

Yeah, some time ago I had a deal with Miramax, but it didn't go anywhere. Now, things are looking good. Once I complete the touring for this record I will be involved in making my first horror flick. It's something I have wanted to do for a long time. It should be interesting. This could be a new venture for me if everything works out. I won't give up music, that's always my number one, but it may scale down on touring at least for a while. There are few other things I want to do as well, one of those is to record *Black Aria II*. That's another project waiting to be completed.



BY MARK KADZIELAWA
PHOTO BY MICHAEL SAVKO

you listen to what we do now, it may sound different because it was produced from a different angle, but it's still very much us.

Also, I see you're on your own label this time around.

I've been on my own label for a quite a while now. What I do is license the each album out, so it looks like someone else is handling us. I have more control this way. If I don't like the situation I leave. There are so many bands that are stuck with their labels. Now, not only do they hold you there with a record contract, but they hold you accountable for

Pit: There was conflicting rumor that this album as going to be faster paced, but to me it sounds like classic GRAVE.

Ola Lindgren: We were trying to go back to the roots. *Back From The Grave* was very mid paced but still brutal but it was kind of lacking the old fast parts that we always had in our recordings. We went back in time when progressing on this album and I would say its sounds more like GRAVE should sound. There's no song that's based on a blast beat and there are only little instances to spice things up. We're not basing a song on speed, there are really heavy songs and really fast songs and it makes it more interesting to listen to.

Always a fan of the classic Sunlight Studio sound, I have to ask why, besides the obvious reason, you changed to Abyss Studios?

We were talking about what we should do with this album and it didn't have so much to do with getting away from Sunlight, but more to do with getting away from home. Everybody lives in Stockholm and Sunlight is ten minutes from my house. You go there in the morning to record and you go home at night and you have all these other elements to disturb you and you can't focus on the recording. We wanted to get away from that and focus on the recording, have a good time and not do anything else. Abyss was a perfect place for that and we've been talking to Peter for many, many years about recording with him so we called him up and he thought it was a great idea.

"Bloodfeast" in my opinion is a standout track but there's an obvious tip of the hat to "Angel Of Death". Has anyone else mentioned this?

Actually yes. The A&R at the German office told me that right away. I think its kind of cool because it starts with the backward vocals and the structure of the

GRAVE's intent is unmerciful and uncompromising when it comes to the death that they deliver.

Epidemically plaguing the murderous masses, *Fiendish Regression* is a pact with all things irreligious and grim solidifying the fact that this Swedish horde has become "Reborn".

BY MICHA KITE



vocal line is kind of in that vein. "Angel Of Death" is a lot faster and this is kind of a slow paced/fast song. You're not the first one to mention it actually.

The cover art has that classic SLAYER look and looks like something Larry Carroll (Reign In Blood, South Of Heaven, Seasons In The Abyss) might have done.

A little bit. The style is kind of similar but it's not intentional. I saw it myself when we were working together with this Polish artist Jacek Wisniewski (MARDUK, MALEVOLENT CREATION). The more detail he put into it with the coloring and everything... I mean its kind of dark but you can still see all the details and there's a slight resemblance. We wanted to get some sort of chaos on one side and the figure on the right turning into a demon or towards the dark side.

Do you feel its better to stick with a formula or take chances when writing each album?

We have our own style and we know that it works but we always try to progress a little bit. We don't do it intentionally but try to make it more of a natural evolution. We've been doing this for a long time and you always have new inspirations. On this album, Jonas did a lot more writing than on the *Back From The Grave* album and I think that shows in the songs



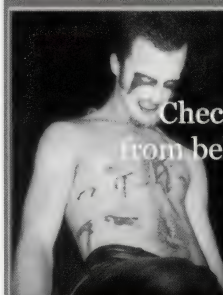
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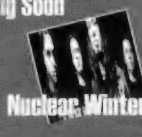
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Without a doubt, **INCANTATION** has proven to be one of the most important death metal bands ever to emerge from the abyss. Over their extensive fifteen-year career they have become an infamous death metal pillar of the international underground metal scene.

Pit: I listened to your new CD, *Decimate Christendom*, and the one thing in must note is the superb production coming out of Mars Recording Compound this time around as compared to 2002's *Blasphemy* release. Is this factor due to more time spent in the studio with Bill twisting knobs and mixing sounds or was it a different approach to the pre recording ideas, such as new gear or recording processes?

John McEntee: Well, This time we spent less time in the studio than with the last couple over there, and the gear was pretty much the same as before. We just basically wanted to improve on what we had last time and give the overall production a more lively sound. I think that on the new album things came out a little more aggressive and heavy because we worked on a more organic and pure sound than maybe in the past.

We started writing some of the songs before *Blasphemy* was even finished. And basically we just practiced them and worked through them as a band. Like for instance on *Blasphemy* and *Infernal Storm* before that, we didn't really have a steady lineup in the band, especially the drummer, our drummer left for a few years due to drug problems. So when we went to do the new album we were able to do it more like a band, work everything out and everyone had input into



BY XAVANTES

Because we really wanted to make all the instruments more legible in the recording yet remain as aggressive and heavy as possible.

I did notice the drums have a very clear mix.

Yeah, I think it's good. It's not like a mix where it's mostly guitar heavy or drum heavy like a lot of bands. We tried to go for a mix where everything had an important part and real heavy, yet sounded like us. We did not want to go for that newer death metal production where everything is too crystal clear; we wanted to have that raw barbaric edge to it.

Blasphemy was a very death metal album, one of my favorites. Yet this time around you returned to your classic doom – death style INCANTATION has been always known for. What if anything prompted this return to the roots of your original writing process?

I don't know if we really wanted to go back, when we did *Blasphemy*, our main concept was to do a good old straightforward death metal album. We were just feeling at the time there weren't enough bands playing good old death metal. Everyone was doing a more fast time or something similar. On the new one it is just us being more natural with ourselves. The new album we just wrote what we wanted to write with no outside influences getting in the way. We just really felt comfortable on the new album, with the current lineup everyone has the same idea and the connection is there.

How long did you spend writing the new material?

the writing of the new material.

For me, the albums that shine through the most are the ones where we worked it out and wrote as a band.

I must break some news to you if you do not already know; I noticed your new cd has been leaked onto the Internet from various file-sharing sources like Kazaa and others. How do you stand on the free music standpoint with the downloading of MP3's?

It is a tough situation really. To say I'm against it or for it would be a lie. I'm kind of somewhere in between. I come from the old school days of tape trading and I mean there where time I didn't necessarily buy something because I had it on tape. For me if I really like something, I want to have it on cd anyways. And I would like to think most true **INCANTATION** fans would want to go out and buy the album not just be happy with MP3's or CD-R's of it.

It is a good way to increase your fan base for touring though.

Yeah, it's a great way for people to hear us. I know people who accidentally came across our music on Napster or something. And it is cool that you can gain new fans that way. Basically things are changing in the music industry and there are ways to benefit from them. Bottom line for us is, we need people to buy our albums or we can't afford to record them but at the same time it is great that people can get our music and enjoy it

March 27th you inked a deal with Listenable Records. How has this been going for you?

Awesome. We signed with them for Europe and just the amount of press and coverage we are getting over there has been some of the best we have gotten ever. As far as the U.S. with Olympic, they have been doing a great job too. Being on the roster with **VITAL REMAINS**, **UNHOLY GHOST**, **IMMONLATION**

and DIABOLIC and just other bands we can relate to and have stuff in common with. And it is good to work with a label that is into promoting brutal death metal stuff.

INCANTATION has decided to remain a three piece during the last few years, though the new album has many harmonies and dual guitar works. Does this mean you may be picking up a touring guitarist for the upcoming Clash of the Demi-Gods tour with BEHEMOTH, KRISIUN and RAGNAROK? And do you plan to try and secure a permanent guitarist for any future releases?

We don't have any plans at the moment to stray away from the three-piece thing. Basically because Kyle, Joe and I work together really well and sometimes to try and look for that fourth person in the band it just seems like it ruins the chemistry that we have. So if we really want to get another guitar player is it going to be a natural thing. We have been playing as a three piece for years now and we really do not want to mess with it.

Speaking of tours, you recently played the Texas Murderfest on September 11. How was the show after some time since being on stage in the U.S.? Tell us about your experience?

Well, the show was cool, but the fest itself... well, our day of the fest was really the only day of the fest, the second day got cancelled because of too many problems or someone had a heart attack. But our day of the fest was cool. The place was a little too big, the turnout wasn't the best, but it was a lot of fun. Plus it is always cool to play in Houston because we have a lot of old school friends from there and it is fun playing to our old friends.

Any plans for a United States tour?

No, we are working on some things, but nothing to announce yet.

I noticed on your website, that you manage and code, (www.incantation.com) a mention of a DVD coming soon. What can the fans expect to find on this DVD and any idea when it might be available?

First of all, the DVD we were originally going to do had gotten all screwed up, the audio for the main live show was ruined and messed up, and we are working on re-filming the main show for the DVD at our upcoming fests. But basically, this DVD is going to be concentrating on the newer **INCANTATION** live shows and maybe have more assorted vintage stuff. And then sometime down the line we are going to do another DVD that is more geared toward



band history stuff. Its just a lot of the vintage footage isn't the best quality and it might be a little more of an underground video.

Do you plan to do a music video for any of the new tracks?

We are shooting a live video for "Dying Divinity". We are not going to be acting or nothing silly like that. We are filming it at our first show that we are playing in Holland. The same guy that did the DVD for IMMOLATION and EXODUS is going to be doing the video footage for us so it should be cool. It is the first time we had a record company that was willing to support us to do a video.

Something not very common in our genre is guest appearances and side projects with other bands. Unity is a goal we should all be about, though many bands choose to fight with one another. You guys have always proved to be a helping band, giving so many other bands the opportunities to play in the U.S. and keeping lasting friendships with them. Ever consider doing guest appearances or side projects on a different level than INCANTATION or does anyone in the band for that matter?

I've done a guest vocal thing actually, my first time doing vocals was on a recording done by a band from Brazil called NUEVO CHAOS. And actually it is kind of weird because the song has vocals by Me, Barney from NAPALM DEATH, Caligula from DARK FUNERAL and a whole bunch of different people. It should be interesting when that gets released. Kyle and I also have a band with my wife called FUNERUS, which is a more old school death metal band like a little more into the Swedish GRAVE sound or ENTOMBED. You know, we been doing that and it has been getting a good response. Besides

that, Kyle also plays drums in ACHERON and another band called WOLVEN SOCIETY too, which is a band with Vincent from ACHERON, our drummer Kyle, Lord Ahriman from DARK FUNERAL and the bassist from MARDUK.

Any upcoming news we did not cover for you and the INCANTATION camp?

Well, I started my own record company called Ibex Moon Records and we released the FUNERUS CD on that and another band called ESTUARY. Recently we released a CD by a European band called BLOODY SIGN. So, you know, you can check that out on the web, (www.ibexmoonrecords.com). As far as band stuff, we are just getting ready for our European tour. Hopefully we will put together a very heavy tour package for the United States and be on tour there soon as well.



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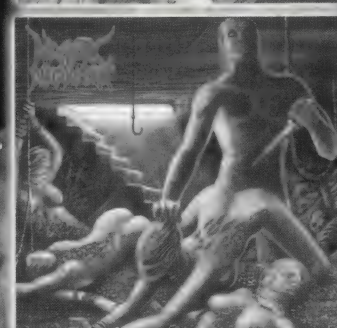
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You've heard the phrase, "Firing on all cylinders," right? It's the first thing that popped into my head while interviewing THE HAUNTED vocalist Peter Dolving. After making a big splash several years ago on the Swedish band's critically acclaimed self-titled debut album, Mr. Dolving decided that he needed to recharge his batteries and departed. Enter Marco Aro; a capable vocalist who performed admirably on *The Haunted Made Me Do It* and *One Kill Wonder*, but ultimately called it quits as well. Through it all, the band charged on, gaining more and more fans and never missing a savage beat, while making no secret of their unhappiness with Earache. With the triumphant return of a rejuvenated Dolving, a scorching new album, *REVOLVER*, and a happy existence at new label home Century Media, THE HAUNTED are poised to once again to destroy everything.

Pit: What it's like to be back in THE HAUNTED?

Peter Dolving: Really good. The fans have really received it well. I feel really honored.

Was it just the right time to return? Did the band approach you?

It happened through a series of really fortunate coincidences for us all, at least that's how it was from my perspective. Marco [Aro] grew really tired of the touring part and I guess he wanted to spend more time with a normal job and with his family. Me in the meantime, I've been doing what I set out to do, kind of get my life back in order. It's been really important for me to take care of my own personal mental state, and also working out some way to get an income outside of being caught up in a band. Any touring musician should really listen to Eddie Van Halen, his commandment number one, which is, "Never get rid of your day job" [laughs]. And I've never had a normal day job like that. I've never really had anything steady, so in the meantime I've worked out my own business and been doing a bunch of music. I'm fortunately in a situation where I'm back on my feet.

So touring and things like that won't be a problem for you now?

No, it's a hell of a lot different now. It's not just me; it's the whole thing with a new record company... This time around it's a deal built out of a mutual kind of agreement that two parties want to do a good job. Why should we not have a good time doing it? So all of us feel really, really happy that it's worked out with Century Media. They're a bunch of really

positive, communicative people, and they're actually shooting straight.

What did you think of the work the band did on *The Haunted Made Me Do It* and *One Kill Wonder*? I assume you were following them.

Absolutely! I love the albums in between. As far as the latest album [before *REVOLVER*], *One Kill Wonder*, I wasn't able to really get into it because I didn't have the time [laughs]. When they did *The Haunted Made Me Do It* I was kind of ogling the thing like a jealous lover or something [laughs]. Like, "man I wish I would have been on that!" It's got incredible songs.

When you began writing with the band again for this album was it a situation where you were able to get right back into the flow of things?

Yeah. It was almost ridiculous. The first hour I think we were a bit shy, but that's pretty natural; we hadn't played together since like late '98. But it took an hour and then we were just jammin' out to old stuff and stuff from *The Haunted Made Me Do It*.

What about your first live gig back in the band?

I was fuckin' nervous! [Laughs]. No man, I was really, really nervous about how I was gonna go down with people, of course. It's worked out beyond any of my expectations.

The album title is written with the word "Evolve" highlighted, although it's called *REVOLVER*. What's the concept here?

Just short and sweet. *Revolver* is one of those words that kind of gets your attention, not necessarily in a good way, but it kinda sticks in there. It also has several meanings in it. [Patrik] Jensen, our guitarist, came up with the idea. It is a reflection of...a click further, as far as how the band has - this is sounding really cheesy [laughs] - evolved because that's really what it is. We thought it worked well with the whole thing.

Musically, it's still THE HAUNTED, but I noticed more pace variety, more so than on any of the past three albums.

Yeah, I think so. We wrote a lot of songs for this one and that has to do a lot with the fact that we were actually able to sit down together as a band, all five of us, and just work this album out the way we did the first one. It's awkward when you have people in the band that live quite far off. Marco [Aro] lives like 500 kilometers north of here. He rarely came to rehearsals. What they'd do is send tapes back and forth. It really affects how you write things. It becomes a slower process and sometimes it's not as

playful I guess. You can really test stuff right away when you're all there. In the end it works well when you do stuff apart, but you kinda lose that playfulness in a way. In many ways, it kind of gets the fun back into recording. It's not so concerned with how people are gonna perceive it. It's more about, "This is really gonna be fun to play live." The whole album has that feel to it.

You use those creepy spoken vocals in several spots when the music slows from thrashing to an eerie plod.

Absolutely. I think everyone has a really different approach to how they do it and it has to do a lot with what your range is, how safe you feel with stuff. I don't know why that is, but I'm in a pretty fortunate situation where I can do a lot of stuff, and that opens up a lot for the other guys too when it comes to what they write. I can go many places with my voice. We just messed around with different structures and that kind of stuff. It's pretty much taking a couple of steps back as far as how we've done the songs, toward the first two albums I guess.

You got SICK OF IT ALL's Lou Koller to sing on "Who Will Decide." How did that come about?

Yeah! It was just a fluke, some good luck. I have this tiny office where I work for the musician's union and I help people out with record contracts, music law, and stuff like that. I was playing the songs that Jonas [Björler, bass] wrote for one of my friends... I started telling him that I hoped Jonas and me would start singing the vocals together because it's got that really cool crust punk thing to it [laughs], and my friend was like, "You've got to call Lou Koller, right away!" I'm thinking, "I can't do that." I really respect him and the same for the other guys. They've been around for a long time and they really had an influence on everything, from metal to just punk and hardcore. He didn't really care what I said; he was going to talk to one of our friends who works for the same distribution that we both have. At the time they were touring Europe, so she called him up and Lou was on it; he's a big fan of the band apparently. I was like, "Wow!" [Laughs]. So we sent a tape out to him, he learned the song, and one day in Gothenburg when they played, he came up, we had a cup of coffee or two, and he just bashed the song in there. Everything was done in like two hours, and then we just went down to their show and had a good time there.

Lyrical, you still seem to be exploring the dark depths of the human psyche. I guess that won't be changing any time soon.

No. I'll be doing that until I hit the grave [laughs].

"FIRING ON ALL CYLINDERS"

BY SCOTT ALISOGLU

You've heard the phrase, right? It's the first thing that popped into my head while interviewing THE HAUNTED vocalist Peter Dolving. After making a big splash several years ago on the Swedish band's critically acclaimed self-titled debut album, Mr. Dolving decided that he needed to recharge his batteries and departed. Enter Marco Aro; a capable vocalist who performed admirably on *The Haunted Made Me Do It* and *One Kill Wonder*, but ultimately called it quits as well. Through it all, the band charged on, gaining more and more fans and never missing a savage beat, while making no secret of their unhappiness with Earache. With the triumphant return of a rejuvenated Dolving, a scorching new album, *REVOLVER*, and a happy existence at new label home Century Media, THE HAUNTED are poised to once again to destroy everything.



CENTURY
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BY RYAN BARTEK

How many of you out there have ever been called a fag for wearing a JUDAS PRIEST t-shirt? How many of you have been subjected to a meathead knuckle dragging that mocks the compulsive GAMMA RAY air guitar solo? Yes, it is a common condition among the metal underground the attempted degradation of the power metal junkie. So many despise the turbo doom, the lazar cataclysms, and the electric eyes. Yet our boys in Europe have never let us down. With an unyielding love of mad 80's worship, the mighty IRON SAVIOR vies for the crown of the power metal elite. Give In, Bow Down and Consume the knowledge of Piet Sielck.

Pit: The last we heard of IRON SAVIOR was during the Condition Red saga. As anyone familiar with the band knows, there is an intense sci-fi story going on conceptually with each album. Can you briefly describe the story thus far to the uninitiated and where exactly we stand during Battering Ram?

Piet Sielck: The story starts out in ancient Atlantis with the IRON SAVIOR... a huge space ship controlled by a computer and a human



IRON
SAVIOR

implanted brain. The IS was build to defend Atlantis against their enemies, but just before the total destruction of Atlantis the machine was being sent away as not to become the pray of the invaders. After 300.000 years the IS returns to earth where it cannot locate Atlantis anymore. It then draws the conclusion that Atlantis has been destroyed and the humans on earth are the ancestors of the enemies. So he attacks. As the story continues man, the IS, and the Calderians (ancestors of those who left earth before Atlantis got destroyed) become best buddies and live on happily united and free fighting some evil bastards from hell or strange dimensions here and there. On Battering Ram man moves to the Andromeda Nebular to kick the asses of some evil robot breed, BUT on this album the story is NOT the main thing.... no concept-album anymore...

What made you decide to take a more streamlined straightforward approach on this album?

If we talk about the lyrics I do agree on your view about Condition Red although musically I do not. I think, that most of the tracks, beside "Thunderbird" are quite straight compared to earlier stuff like on Dark Assault or even Unification. On Battering Ram I really didn't feel like singing about spaceships and deep space

episodes anymore. Because the song structure on this album is even more straightforward than on Condition Red, I wanted to have lyrics that go along with this. To give you an example: "Protector" is a cool song which many people like very much on stage but if you are not familiar with the storyline, you have no clue of what the fuck I am talking about. With "Battering Ram" or "Break the Curse" this is completely different. Even though you are not a native speaker you will understand the general outline right away which makes a whole lot easier to connect to the song.

In your opinion, why have European audiences embraced power metal more than American audiences? Do you still get a decent amount of fan mail from U.S. shores?

Actually I am getting quite a lot of U.S. mail. Your country is so fucking big. I am getting a lot of mails where people complain that they seem to be the only metal fan in the area. This kind of music still is underground, but it grows. Specifically the Internet is a great media to connect all those lonely metal fans spread across your country. The very moment major companies get interested in metal you will reach a lot more people, so spread the word and make this music more popular...

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Poland is now home to a slew of quality metal bands, especially those of a more death-oriented and extreme nature. But there is only one **VADER**; I mean come on, we're talking the Eastern European version of **SLAYER** here, and that's no exaggeration. Peter Wiwczarek and company keep churning out album after devastating album of some of the most vicious death/thrash that this writer has ever heard. And when the band isn't making albums like 2002's excellent *Revelations*, they're squeezing in MCDs like *Blood/Reign Forever World* that held the hardcore fans over until they could get their grubby little hands on the crushing new full-length, *The Beast*. No sur-

Pit: You were injured during a tour in Scandinavia and had to drop off the **NAPALM DEATH/CANNIBAL CORPSE** U.S. tour, the first time you ever cancelled a tour. I was very disappointed to hear that. What happened?

Peter Wiwczarek: I had a big problem with my back, my spine. I broke something in my spine. It was an accident that happened before and I was suffering. The doctor said I had a broken disc, so I needed to take time to recover [after the operation on my spine]. It happens. I think everything will get better. 2004 was the baddest fuckin' year in our life [laughs].

And Doc suffered a serious hand injury earlier in the year.

He can't play now. I'm not sure he can even play the same way he did.

I'm assuming all these problems caused a significant delay in recording the album and releasing it.

It's important in metal. But you know the sound... Everybody likes something different, it's normal. But this sound is very important; it always was and always will be. I don't know what's going to change with the next album... [it will be a change] in a good way, but different.

You used the same producer [Petior Lukaszewski] again on *The Beast*. I can't imagine anyone else producing a **VADER album at this point.**

[Laughs] This man, Petior... This time we recorded with him, but it's a different studio [RG Studio]; it's bigger and way more modern. That was also very important.

Of course, the album art is classic **VADER as well and you continue to use the Polish artist, Jacek Wisniewski. The sound, the cover art, and all of those things are important in making the kind of **VADER** album that the fans expect. It's a complete package.**

That was kind of an apocalyptic thing. This time we call the beast what is the bad part of ourselves. That's why it's symbolic. It's like everything that was happening around us, and that was the main influence for the album. It's not that one song was inspired by it. We talked about ourselves, the dark side of it.

I love *Revelations* and I'm trying to decide if I like *The Beast* better. In some ways, it seems like this album hits harder and gets to the point right away. What are you hearing from the fans and others?

All the albums that we recorded are in the **VADER** style, but so different. So it was hard to make any decision because there are some people who like more of a grindcore style and blast beats and this absolute extreme kind of music. This one is more melodic, but it's no less powerful. Part of the riffs reminds me more of what we made in the beginning. But even those extreme maniacs, after



BY SCOTT ALISOGU

prises here - *The Beast* is **VADER** to the bone, and it might even be as lethal as *Revelations* (I'm still trying to make up my mind). As to where the disc stands in comparison to any other album in the group's impressive catalogue, Peter won't venture a guess. As far as he's concerned, that's up to the group's dedicated legion of fans. It may have been a tough year for the band (playing with **METALLICA** in front of 50,000 people in Poland notwithstanding), but how tough is tough when it comes to **VADER**? It doesn't matter what obstacles stood in the way (album delays, cancelled tours, bus accidents, personal injuries), this Polish war machine could not be stopped. The metal wannabes of the world could stand to take a few lessons from **VADER**.

Yes, we were supposed to record the album in February. After the accident when Doc broke his hand on the second day of recording, we had to do something so we [decided] we would do the recording later, and it was finally down to May/June. The only way to finish the album was to find a drummer that was able to replace Doc. So after we checked on several guys, we found Daray [VESANIA]. He was the only one that was that good.

He's done the job because the drumming on this album is extra tough, and the kick drum sound is devastating. It's a thunderous attack.

This time we mixed with the best trigger sound of death metal bands with an acoustic sound, so that just gave it all this power. There were several things though that we used for the first time in recording. That's why we got an analog kind of sound. It's not to lose the past [sound on **VADER** albums]; it's more just powerful.

And that would seem to be very important because **VADER has such a distinctive sound. You can always recognize a **VADER** song.**

You know, this is the art, so everything is important. We try to show something in many types of art. Metal is more than just the sound; it's also the words, and everything. That's what makes metal so very special. So that's why we put in all the different things.

It's so much more personal to metal fans.

Yeah, it's always personal. We're talking about emotions [laughs] and it's always personal.

As I was listening to *The Beast* I was thinking about how you're able to continually come up with these great riffs. It seems like you never run out of them.

I don't know it's so hard to talk about it because I'm just the composer of the songs. I'm not the person who decides that. It's up to the people, the maniacs, whether they like it or not.

When did you decide you wanted to call this album, *The Beast*? What's the meaning there?

It's kind of a conceptual title, calling the album *The Beast*. It's not just the beast with horns or hooves or this kind of thing that you saw on the *Revelations* cover.

they listen to the album several times, they get that point that it's powerful. It's pretty hard to say how the next album will sound.

You never keep the fans waiting for new **VADER material for very long. You often put out an MCD in between albums, like you did with the *Blood/Reign Forever World* MCD between *Revelations* and *The Beast*. Will you do that again before the next full-length album is released?**

Of course. You know, since we became a professional band, the only thing we do is music. So if we're not touring or recording, then we're practicing or preparing for a tour. We really like that life [laughs]. If we get a break between tours, we try to do something for all those diehard fans that wait forever to get the next one. Besides, it's our job, so we have to do something [laughs].

I imagine you'll be doing this for another 10 or even 20 years. Maybe you'll be like the **MOTORHEAD of death metal or thrash metal.**

[Laughs] Oh, it's hard to say. If the world is going to survive for that time, so will we.



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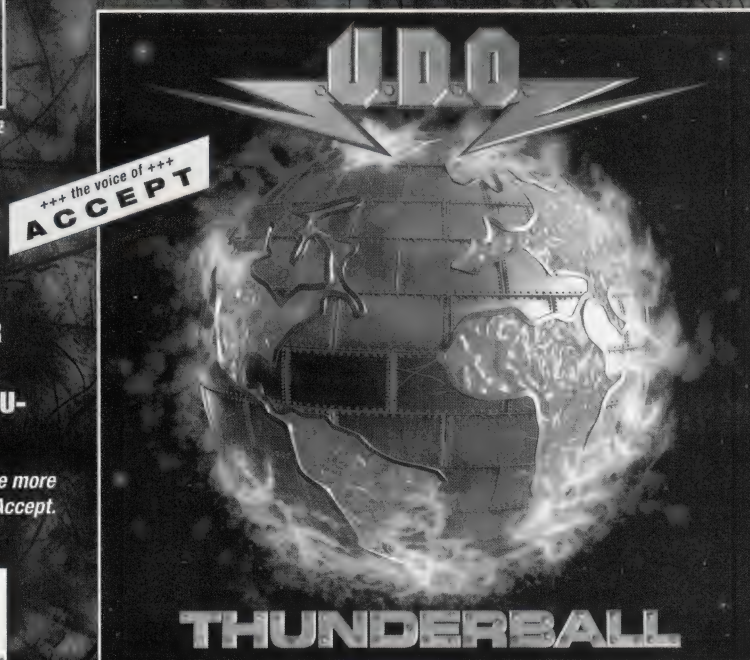
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Pit: You are in New York to film a video, right?

Mortiis: Well we will be doing two videos for the album, the one for "The Grudge" that we are doing here and another one for "Decadent and Desperate". "Decadent and Desperate" is going to be gritty and a very metal video. Sort of a performance piece, but decayed and dirty. "The Grudge" will be more storyline and stuff. You'll see it when it comes out. The lyrics are about carrying a grudge for a long time against people, the idea of being trapped inside with anger. We'll see if we can turn into a metaphor for something.

My copy of the new CD didn't have any lyrics. Is there a theme running through all the songs?

No there's no theme or a concept album. There are a lot of parallels. A lot of the songs are about rage or anger on *The Grudge*. *The Smell Of Rain* was more about being depressed or sad. That album was a lot more gothy than I wanted.

Well that album came out in 2001. What took so long for the follow-up?

Mortiis

BY CHRISTOPHER ALO

Entering the Manhattan hotel room of Norwegian industrial troll MORTIIS, I'm not sure what to expect. Will he be wearing the make up and give me an interview in character? Will I be able to have a conversation with him and not laugh? Well to my surprise, MORTIIS did in fact sit down with me, sans the Lord of the Rings costume and filled me in on his latest album, *The Grudge*. He turned out to be quite intelligent and also extremely passionate about his music. *The Grudge* is his strongest album thus far, and MORTIIS can't wait to get on the road and rock with his new band backing his electro-industrial rhythms.

I've done a lot since then. I formed the band and that takes some time. A lot of people don't have a clue how long these things take. In the summer of 2001 we released *The Smell Of Rain*. 2002 was spent forming the band and doing some touring. I wanted the band to sound more industrial and harder, which we really needed to do live. Then the new album was recorded from summer 2003 to summer of 2004. We didn't spend the entire time in the studio. Next we really want to tour. We haven't been able to really tour the States, which pisses me off.

The last time you toured the US it was with CHRISTIAN DEATH.

Yeah, but that was a totally different time. If I did that show now, I would kill myself. That was four years ago and that was all about being a performance artist. Now we're playing on guitars and I'm doing lead vocals and being a rock band. We really want to show people in the States what we are about. The songs have

become more accessible, more structured.

To me *The Grudge* seems to be a lot more listenable.

I didn't do that because I wanted to be predictable. But I am also a listener of music. I mean, come on, I grew up with KISS (laughs). As well as WASP and ALICE COOPER, which I guess explains the image (laughs). I think that having said that, we have a lot to show to our potential fans. We want to tour, but it comes to a financial decision about losing money. But we will tour the US, or else I'm going to kill someone.

What can we expect to see in the live show?

A lot of aggression. I sacrificed all the effects and cool props. Now we just rely on a really good performance band. I've broken my guitarist's ribs twice. I can't do that anymore (laughs). I used to attack him; it was very Trent Reznor (laughs). I guess it's a lack of self-esteem. But when the stage fog kicks in, I just go apeshit.

I was just in Europe and I saw posters up all over for your European tour with SUSPIRIA.

We are very good friends with them, and we have the same manager. We are headlining in certain markets except where they are stronger, like in Germany. That's a very tough fucking market. They get every fucking show, and it gets hard when the



PHOTO BY PAUL HARRIES

audience is not into it. We have a lot more guitars now, but we also have a lot of industrial elements, and some of that gothic thing. I guess we are a bit of a crossover band. But NINE INCH NAILS made it fucking happen, so we can do it.

The *Grudge* reminds me of NINE INCH NAILS.

Oh, I love NINE INCH NAILS. There were a couple parts where I felt that maybe I was ripping people off, and then I said fuck it (laughs). One of the songs "The Gibber" sounds a lot like "Jesus Built My Hot Rod". It wasn't intentional, we have more melody, but I tried to be conscious of that.

It seems as though you really found yourself on this album.

Definitely. *The Smell of Rain* threw me in a couple different directions. But now we kind of discovered where we want to be. That's what I've found. I love the fact that I have freed myself with *The Grudge*, without selling out. It's very exciting.

Well it's a more cohesive record, but I certainly wouldn't call it commercial.

It's a very noisy album. There are a lot of multi-lay-

ers of noise. For a while I called this album *All Music Must Be Destroyed* (laughs). As the album progressed, I moved away from that. Then I decided to do a ROB ZOMBIE kind of remix and then I decided to track ten guitars. It was difficult to mix, but it made it a lot of fun. I'm nervous to see the fans reaction to this.

MORTIIS has had some collectibles over the years. Will there be a limited edition version of the new album?

Yeah, we are working on that now. We are doing something where all the pages of the cover and booklet are printed on transparent paper. I had this idea for years. TOOL and SLIPKNOT did something similar. It's really cool. There are layers and layers and you can peel off the artwork, it's like a morphing process. It's going to be limited, maybe a few thousand. If you make less, then people won't even know that it exists. Like that book I did. It exists, but there are only 800 copies. Kids ask me if it is real, so I send them to eBay (laughs). I have only one copy myself.

Would you ever reprint that?

I don't know if I want to. It was very fantasy based and very much like Tolkien, and that's not where I am at right now. With this image I have, it's very easy for people to think that I am this fantasy troll type. That's not the way it is anymore. These days MORTIIS is all about who I am as a person.

Well what about the image? The *Grudge* sees you going in a more mature and confident direction. Have you thought about losing the mask?

Well I've still got it. The reason its still there is that it is so much a part of me. If I didn't have it, it would feel like an amputation. But I'm not afraid of amputation for the record. I'm not saying I will wear this thing forever.

So you could see yourself losing the mask at some point?

It could go either way. We'll see.

It must be hell performing with it on?

It covers my whole face and my ears. When it's over my ears, it reduces my hearing by about 50%.

How long does it take to apply?

It used to take me about two and a half hours. I've done it so many times that now it only takes about an hour. If I'm going to do a show, I have to put it on a little bit before the show. It needs drying time. You don't want to be putting it on when the intro tape is playing (laughs).

Has it ever come off during a performance?

I toured the UK last year and I was head banging like a frantic idiot. My dreads are heavy and they were hitting the ears. One ear was coming lose, so I just took it and ripped it off. I was embarrassed, but I just played it off. It happened.

So it's either full make up or none then?

I don't know, to be honest. We do some gothic kind of makeup sometimes. We did a mask less photo shoot. But Earache is a little shaky about it. You should check our website.

What do you think then of the ultra-militant black metal fans who think that you should have stuck doing the EMPEROR style of music?

That was a long time ago. There are kids going around today who say that they are "true" black metal fans, but they were six years old when I was in EMPEROR (laughs). Who the fuck are you to tell me what to do? But then you have your 35 year olds, and I'm 28, who feel the same way. But than that's tough shit for you. I grew up and that creates the person that I am. If someone offered \$2 Million dollars to go back to EMPEROR, than it would all be down to Ishan. But for that money, I'm pretty sure we would do a couple gigs (laughs). I would need to learn how to play bass again (laughs). I didn't know how to play bass when we started EMPEROR.

ENTERTAINMENT

As a long time UNLEASHED fanatic, 2002's *Hell's Unleashed* not only left a foul taste in my mouth but also made me question the bands musical merit. How could such a voracious enigma counter with such a weak effort? I'll admit I wasn't as passionate about the pre-release hype for *Sworn Allegiance* but you know what? Sometimes its good to be wrong, as I've once again been force-fed the bestial virtue of one of the genres finest!

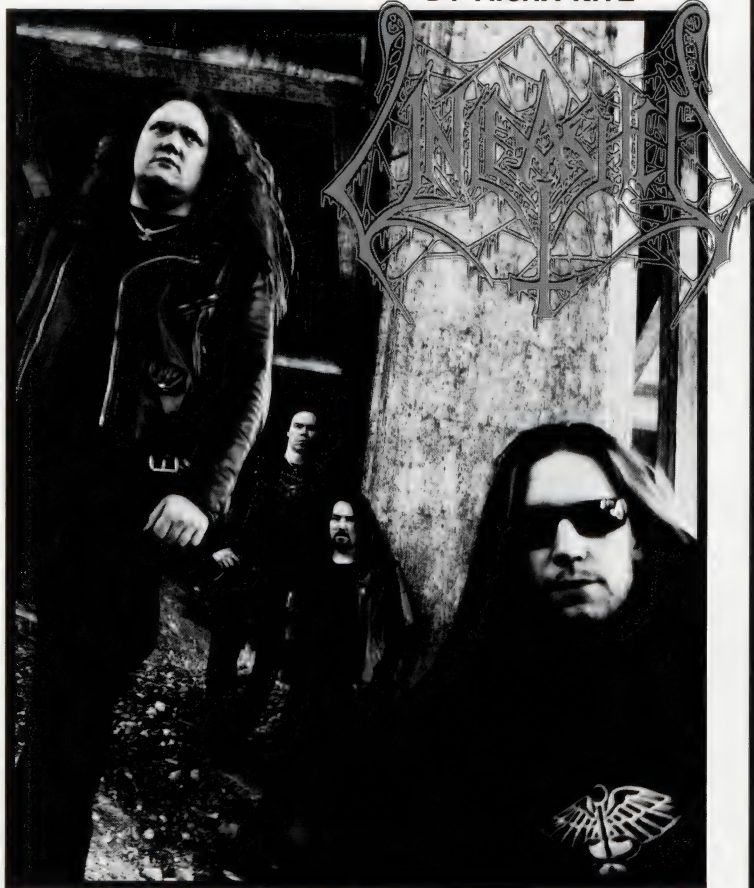
BY MICHA KITE

Pit: *I wasn't crazy about the comeback album Hell's Unleashed, but Sworn Allegiance is comparable to an album like Shadows In The Deep.*

Johnny Hedlund: Cool that's good to hear! First off that is pretty much what I've been hearing for the past two months. I haven't done too many interviews in the US or Canada yet so its good to hear this coming from the other side of the ocean as well. What we did when we got out of the studio from *Hell's Unleashed* was play some festivals for that record and we sat down and talked and said, "well, where do we go from here" and normally that's not an easy task. You really want to try and develop all the time obviously; and that's the same for every musician I guess. There was talk about more energy in the earlier records and that they were faster but we also liked the production to be a little bit better. If you look at the production of the older records...that was the 90's and that's that. I think everything has improved these days. The engineers have improved, the producers have improved and the equipment has improved so obviously we're going to have to do a better job than in '92. Then there's the energy of the record. The edge with a nastier touch to it and that's what we wanted to try and get back. In order to do that you need to be hungry of course and I think we succeeded this time. I think it was worth it to take the time to discuss what we needed to do to take it to the next level. Way back in the 90's we were touring a lot and we put out record after record and we never really had the time to sit down and think and talk things over so this was a really good experience. I think that's the main reason *Sworn Allegiance* is a little different than the other albums.

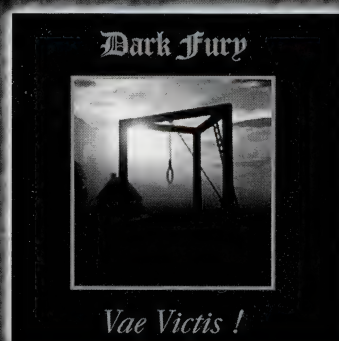
You spoke of capturing a really hungry energy. Did you approach things differently when it came to recording?

It doesn't have so much to do with the studio but more to do with the guys in the band and how hungry we are after fifteen years. That's the main importance and then there's the obvious. You're in the studio and you can have a number of different approaches to what you do. You can do it a little bit more live and you can do it a little more step by step. This time we said lets make every instrument including the vocals a little bit nastier all the time, all the way through. Lets have more of a live feeling to every instrument and see if we can capture some of what we normally do on stage and put that into this record. I can go into the studio and do the vocals in my sleep basically, but then again I can go in there and have a different mental approach and be a little bit more on edge or angry. It could've also been a little over the edge but you don't want to step over that line where it becomes almost a live recording.



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Judas Priest

BY CHRISTOPHER ALO

PHOTO BY FRANK WHITE

After releasing their monumental *Painkiller* album, JUDAS PRIEST vocalist Rob Halford left the band, effectively putting an end to one of the greatest and most important bands in music history. PRIEST and Rob Halford carried on without each other for over a decade independently, both to varying degrees of success. Last year the metal gods were reunited and began work on their first new material since 1990. Vocalist Rob Halford and guitarist Glenn Tipton talk to Pit about this summer's reunion tour as well as their eagerly awaited comeback album.



Pit: How has the reunion tour been so far?

Rob Halford: It's a blast, it's been great and I think you can see that. We are playing better now. We are playing stronger now. We are playing with more passion than we ever did before, quite frankly. This is just a great way to prepare everybody for the new record.

Glenn Tipton: Right from the first moment we stepped out on stage again with Rob, it felt like he had never been away.

How far along is work on the new album?

R.H.: We do have to do some overdubbing and some mixing. Once the announcement for the reunion came out, there was just a massive surge for fans to want to see the band. So we put the recording on hold to do the tour. We are just out there letting everybody see how great the band is and getting everybody ready for the record.

When will the album be out?

R.H.: The end of December or the beginning of January will be the release for the new album. We've just got to take a little bit of time to finish it, which is a good thing. We will have been away from it for a while and I think we will be able to be more microscopic and make sure it is 100% right.

Is there an album title yet? Can you divulge any song titles?

R.H.: We don't like doing that, because it spoils the surprise (laughs). That's like me telling you what your presents are before Christmas (laughs). We're trying to keep the title, the artwork and everything under wraps until we are ready to unleash it on the world.

G.T.: We haven't actually decided on what the title is going to be yet. Everything is moving with us. The title could be anything. We are fanatical about making everything correct.

How has it been working with Roy Z as producer? Rob worked on his last two solo efforts with him and he seemed to be the perfect man for the job.

G.T.: It's been great. We had a whole list of producers we could have worked with. But as you are aware, we always co-produce our own albums. We write and arrange the songs and we have a lot of input. We just need a producer who wants to work in the way that we work and won't try and change the band. We've found all those qualities in Roy and so far, so good. We've still got a way to go with final overdubs and mixing. But we've been working pretty well together at the moment and that's what counts.

R.H.: We do work fast in the studio; we don't like to wait around for things to happen. And Roy is a multitasker. He's not only a producer; he's a good musician. He comes in with good ideas. It's easy to get distracted, so when we get something we like to put it down as quickly as possible. I think we made a good choice.

You've been on the road this summer as part of the Ozzfest tour alongside BLACK SABBATH. It truly is a dream pairing, the original BLACK SABBATH touring with the original JUDAS PRIEST. Were there ever any shows that the two bands actually did together in the past?

R.H.: Ken, or K.K. reckons that we did in 1976. But I don't think I was in the band (laughs). But he says I was (laughs). He said it was the Masonic Temple, but I can't remember that. He says that was the first and only time that **PRIEST** ever played with **SABBATH**. Suffice to say that this is much better now. It's a lot better than playing to three people and a dog in the Masonic Hall (laughs).

G.T.: And we've got a lot more room on stage (laughs).

Rob, you had the unique experience of fronting BLACK SABBATH for a weekend in 1992. The bootleg tapes of those two shows are a must have, if I can say that to you.

R.H.: I was very honored to be asked to do that. That was just a lot of fun to do. And if it weren't for the bootlegs, I wouldn't have a memory of it.

Sometime after that, there was talk of you recording an album with Tony Iommi?

R.H.: Tony and I talked about maybe doing something, but it didn't quite work out. I don't know whether that is a good thing or a bad thing, but obviously it won't happen right now because we are now in separate worlds. I wouldn't rule it out in the future because it is interesting when you can sit down and work with another musicians mind.

Also this years Ozzfest sports many of todays up and coming metal bands. How do you think JUDAS PRIEST fits in today's metal scene?

R.H.: I think we are important and as needed now as ever. We are respected and still a very relevant band. Part of the reason for going on this tour is to show just how great this band truly is.

G.T.: I think we help to inspire people to keep flying the flag for heavy metal.

R.H.: We've always been proud to say that we are a British heavy metal band. Many of the younger bands have been coming and checking us out, to see what is going on. And it's just a great feeling. And so it goes.

On this reunion tour, the set list is really made up of just the "hits". Might we see some less obvious choices on the next tour?

G.T.: Yeah well we intend to focus more and play songs off the new album. But I'm sure we will be able to play some more really early stuff. It will be an exciting set. It will be a challenging set.

R.H.: It's funny you should ask that, Chris, because a lot of journalists are asking us that. And I think a lot of fans are asking us that as well because of the new retrospective box set, *Metalogy*. It's been stirring up a lot of brilliant songs. Songs that we haven't played in a long time or maybe songs we have never played before. So we need to look at that and maybe we can do some of that in 2005. Maybe when we are doing our own headlining tour we can do a bit of a retrospective set list. We can do that now. Obviously we like to stay fresh and we'll love to play the new material.

Speaking strictly as a fan, I enjoyed seeing Rob with the HALFORD band perform "Genocide" and "Tyrant", just like I enjoyed seeing PRIEST with "Ripper" perform "Exciter" and "Devil's Child".

G.T.: Well there are quite a few older numbers that would be good to play. Maybe we will have each member pick a song that they would like to play. I would love to play "The Rage". It would be an easy song to do, but it's so powerful. There's been talk before of doing "Before The Dawn", which I would love to do. "Dissident Aggressor", too.

R.H.: We never live in the past because we are very optimistic about the future. Anything is possible. When you put a set list together you are taking people on a trip. It has to flow just right. You really have to think hard about how everything is going to work with the lighting and costumes, etc. There are a lot of people behind the scenes of the show.

Before I saw you live in the US, I caught you live at the Graspop Metal Meeting in Belgium. The two headliners were ICED EARTH and JUDAS PRIEST, which is quite an interesting coincidence. Did you happen to run into "Ripper" Owens?

R.H.: No, but I think they were playing on another day.

G.T.: Yes, I think "Ripper" had left town by then.

R.H.: But everybody was chasing everybody else. I did run into Mike Chlasiak who is now playing with **TESTAMENT**. My former drummer, Bobby Jarzombek is now in **ICED EARTH** with Tim now, so what a small world is that? We were all wondering if we were going to cross each other's paths and sometimes you do and sometimes you don't.

When Rob left JUDAS PRIEST, it seemed as though Glen assumed the role of leader. Now that Rob is back in the band, how has your role changed?

G.T.: I don't look at that as necessarily being true. In a band, there is someone who encourages more than leads. And I'm sure I would get a backhand from K.K., if I said I was the leader (laughs). I think I'm a bit of an organizer as well. I'm a bit of a nuisance really. There's nobody that leads this band. Ian is important too, doing his bit behind the shadows, and Scott's been with us now for 15 years, so everyone does have a say in this band. Nobody assumes the hat of the chief. We are very close as a band. We very rarely have arguments, but we do have sparks with each other. I have to be very careful with Kenny, K.K., we are of similar temperaments and we can spark off. But it's those sparks that can ignite some chemistry.

R.H.: But this exists in every band. It's all about the creative spark for the creative chemistry. It's like any team. You have elements of leadership, but as long as you are aware of it, you need to make the best judgment for the team.

G.T.: It works well with Rob, KK and I because if there is any bit of tension between any two, the third person will inevitably step in and diffuse it. That's a great thing.

R.H.: I think it's easier with three people as the main songwriters in the band than with two. Lennon and McCartney were known to have their friction. But with three, there is always the third party to try and be the middleman or whatever.

You recorded a new live DVD in Barcelona, correct?

R.H.: Yeah we did a DVD in Barcelona and Valencia. We're not sure if it will come out as simply special bonus footage or if it will come out as a completely separate release. We wanted to get this part of the tour on DVD as part of the bands history really. We are trying to somehow incorporate the footage into this release if we possibly can.



Music Reviews



ARCH ENEMY – *Dead Eyes See No Future* – Century Media Records

This is one cool EP, especially if you're an ARCH ENEMY fan. The disc includes the studio version of "Dead Eyes See No Future" from *Anthems of Rebellion*, three scorching live tracks ("Burning Angel," "We Will Rise," and "Heart of Darkness") that come complete with an Andy Sneap recording/mixing job, a handful of cover songs, and the "We Will Rise" video. It's great to hear the live stuff, but the covers are especially intriguing. Most notable is a dirty, down-tuned version of MEGADETH's "Symphony of Destruction." The song structure may be the same, but you'd never mistake it for the original. MANOWAR's "Kill with Power" is also given the AE treatment (and more effectively than you might think). Finally, guitarist Michael Amott returns to his CARCASS roots on the band's version of "Incarnated Solvent Abuse," particularly worthwhile if you're a student of both groups. Fans are advised to buy this immediately. – Scott Alisoglu
Century Media Records: 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd., Hawthorne, CA 90250 USA www.centurymedia.com

Madness

BETHLEHEM – *Mein Weg* – Red Stream

Jürgen Bartsch is, at least in my opinion, the Rembrandt of experi-metal. As in the context of while alive few will understand, care or give the slightest shit. Years after we're all dead and/or elderly farts in adult diapers with crooked spines from years of way too much head banging, BETHLEHEM will go down as one of the most esteemed of their genre. Of course I expect probably about eight or nine of you out there to agree with me in full, but do yourself a favor by checking out *Mein Weg*. This is BETHLEHEM's latest record, a considerable formulation of all their sounds both past and present. The general sound is along the lines of *Alexander Welt*, although more fully explored with the urgency and passion of earlier works such as *Dictus Te Necare* or *SUIZID*. The drudging gloominess is ever present as are a few nods to their black (ish) metal past, but it is far more upbeat in tempo, and more kicking all around. Exotic sounds are employed that have a nuance of IN EXTREMO but also an obsession with textures, hypnotic passages, powerful vocals that sing rather than scream (and for once) a concentration on some breakdowns. Plus a hidden track of – I shit you not – Sinatra's "My Way." This is a new chapter and progression for BETHLEHEM, one that is rich and satisfying, full in its scope of vision lacking any filler. One of the best of the year, hands down. – Ryan Bartek
Red Stream: PO Box 196242, Winter Springs, FL 32719-6242 USA www.redstream.org



THE CHASM – *The Spell of Retribution* – Wicked World

This is one of the captivating albums that creep into my mailbox from time to time. Impressive collection of intelligent and unique music. I want to label this as a mix of doom and death, but there's more at work here than simply representing genres of metal. THE CHASM presents songs that lyrically challenge and sonically please. *Retribution's* ten tracks take slightly over an hour to cycle, but are definitely worth the ride. Although the growling vocals tend to be a little one-dimensional, the lyrics make up for it with complex ideas based on philosophical and spiritual aspects of the band's South American ancestry. Dense, bottom-heavy overall sound that clips along steadily with few drastic tempo changes. Gives this album a solid, balanced feel and allows the listener to get lost in the musical atmosphere. The guitar work is a mixture of strong rhythmic riffing and inventive soloing. Fans of early SEPULTURA and modern HORNED GOD should seriously look into this album. – Kurt Krueger
Earache Records: 43 West 38th St, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10018 USA www.earache.com

CRAFT – *Terror Propaganda* – Second Black Metal Attack – Moribund Records

It doesn't really seem to matter what hybrid of black metal a band might be tearing out, every sound seems to creep back towards the big three – DARKTHRONE, BURZUM and BATHORY. CRAFT hails from Sweden and is no exception to that rule. A wide range of sounds emerge on the *Terror Propaganda* album that show an homage to their influences all the while experimenting and siphoning their own unique voice. Most of the material is in early DARKTHRONE fashion with more of a death metal bent in the chops. Early BATHORY also makes its appearance in the chug-a-lug borderline satanic punk feel that maintains a more rockin' aesthetic. Dreary, hook-laden riffs merge with drudging percussion and cold atmosphere's all around. Highly distinguishable, you can actually understand the lyrics for the most part (kind of an Abbath tilt), and the production is gritty, yet razor sharp. There is a gigantic emphasis on hypnotic passages, whether they are in texture or the dominant riff. However, the compositions feel unfinished at times – there are a lot of fadeouts going on that flaw the end result. Still, this is a strong offering from a fairly established cult band. Worth checking out for sure. – Ryan Bartek
Moribund Records: 530-A 19th Street, Port Townsend, WA 98368 USA www.moribundcult.com



MESHUGGAH – *I* – Fractured Transmitter Record Co.

First of all, thank you. This is fucking brilliant. A new EP, one track, and twenty-one minutes of the best shit you will find. MESHUGGAH is one of those rare bands that continually reshape their sound and this album is a step in another new direction. *I*, the letter and not the Roman numeral, is a "concept" album that explores the illusion of perception. The main character is battling a personality conflict. He is trying to figure out whether he is a god or a madman. When I speak of a fresh perspective and band's putting their reputation on the line, this is what I am referring to. MESHUGGAH entered the studio for this with nothing and emerged six weeks later with a monster recording that combines all the elements that have made the world a fan of this incredible band. Lyrically, this song qualifies as poetry with some fiercely introspective lines ("This is an anomaly. Disabled. What is true?") and wildly aggressive lines ("A snail along a straight razor – dividing itself through motion"). I has moments of deafening thickness, haunting melody, and a broken rhythm that is as much an expression of the characters' confusion as his words. I am excited that MESHUGGAH is again taking their own reins and guiding their madness towards new layers of metal depth. Kudos, gents and keep it coming. Highly recommended. Period. – Kurt Krueger
Fractured Transmitter Record Co.: PO Box 33518, Cleveland, OH 44133 USA www.fracturedtransmitter.com

SETH – *Era Decay* – Avantgarde Music

Top honors from my stack of CD's for review in this issue. *Era Decay* wails! I was immediately struck by the discordant melodies and how thoroughly they permeate every aspect of SETH's sound. There is so much going on in the background that you want to focus on that, but you cannot deny the mastery happening in the foreground. SETH has managed to develop a sound that is dangerously evil and sharply intelligent. The vocals tend toward the black metal style, usually sung at high pitches with growls used to great effect. The guitars are the major accomplishment on this album and should impress most fans and musicians alike. Cerix and Heimoth have developed a disturbingly good soundscape by blending the eeriness of old black metal with the pure violence of death and thrash. Alsvind (also with ENTHRONED) helps to create a pulverizing pace for *Era* with expressive and articulate drumming. *Era* is rhythmically rich and explores various genres with reckless abandon. SETH serves up nine tracks in forty minutes, which is one fine performance. My only complaint is that I can't remove this album from my CD player. The album is currently available and if you have the means, I highly recommend picking this up. A crucial listening experience that will challenge and please many fans of extreme metal. I cannot wait for more from this emerging French powerhouse! – Kurt Krueger
Avantgarde Music: PO Box 19, 20010 Vanzago, Milan, Italy www.avantgardemusic.com



VADER – *The Beast* – Metal Blade Records

Hey, if it ain't broke, don't fix it, right? Much like kindred spirits SLAYER, you know exactly what you're getting when you purchase a VADER album. Hence, it's no surprise that *The Beast* is definitive VADER. If you loved *Revelations* (and I do), then you'll love *The Beast*. The band's patented thrash/death metal sound is as vicious as it's ever been: Peter's distinctive snarl more menacing, the riffs thick and biting, the drums punishing (that double-bass work is one hell of a punch in the gut). *The Beast* is not a clone of *Revelations*, just a better version of the same assault and battery that this band does so well. I'd even venture to say it's a more consistent and pointed affair. An incredibly tight delivery on every song, a load of ferocious riffs, the odd changeup (like the mellow intro to "Choices"), and an indefinable heaviness that few bands can match, makes *The Beast* yet another quality VADER release. The claws are out, the fangs sharp. Let the blood spill. – Scott Alisoglu
Metal Blade Records: 2828 Cochran St PMB 302, Simi Valley, CA 93065 USA www.metalblade.com

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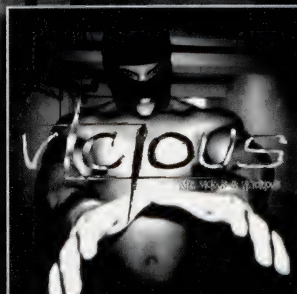


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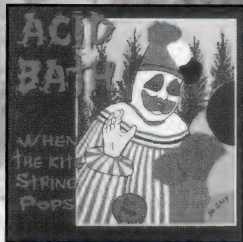
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ACID BATH - *When The Kite String Pops* - Rotten Recs

Well what can I really say about this album other than if you don't already own it you seriously need to get off your ass and pick up a copy today! This is one of those bands that come around once in a lifetime that is so amazing it's hard to believe they never blew up. As a matter of fact they didn't even start to get a huge following until after the band broke up around 1997 (I think?) after the untimely death of bassist Audie Pietre. *When The Kite String Pops* originally came out in 1994 but has now been re-mastered for everyone's listening pleasure. Quite honestly I didn't think anything

was wrong with the original recording, I do however think it sounds much heavier than before which is without doubt a big plus. *When The Kite String Pops* is filled to the brim with brutal melody. It manages to be very intense, irate, and poignant all at the same time, which is part of the reason I love this album so much. It is a perfect mix of so many raw emotions one can't help but be sucked into its hopelessness. The lyrics are much more like something out of an Edgar Allan Poe poem filled with inner demons and torment... dare I say they're beautiful? Every song has it's own sound so you can easily distinguish each song from each other. This is, in my opinion, one of the most underrated and truly amazing albums to ever be released in metal. Now seriously, if you do not have this album go and pick it up and do yourself a favor and get their second and final album *Paegan Terrorism Tactics* and the DVD *Double Live Bootleg* since you will probably never be able to see this band perform live again. - Kelli Malella Rotten Records: PO Box 56, Upland, CA 91786 USA www.rottenrecords.com



ASCENDANCY

Rise Of A Dead Empire - Independent

ASCENDANCY, like other awesome northeast underground bands like BURIAL and GORATORY, believes that making extreme music is serious business. While others just dream about touring other countries, getting radio play, or recording at a top studio, ASCENDANCY has already done those things. Frontman/guitarist Terence Herrera, who once considered a career in professional wrestling, has a sturdy, listenable voice that gives the band's melodic death/black metal music a consistently dark tone. Guitars

dominate here (not surprising as there are two players), but most interesting is the way ASCENDANCY evoke a dramatic keyboard feel without keyboards! Very creative music here folks! - Jon "K" Konjoyan ASCENDANCY: 75 Webster St, Randolph, MA 02368 USA www.ascendancymetal.com



CIPHER SYSTEM - *Central Tunnel Eight* - Lifeforce Recs

This band has been around for many years but this is their debut full-length. Definitely represents the melodic death trend Scandinavia spawned back in the early 90's with a modern spin. CIPHER incorporates thrash, industrial, and death into a surprisingly good mix of genres. Not necessarily original in concept, but exciting in execution. A solid paced eleven tracks coming in at just around forty-five minutes. This album takes little time to break into the fast-paced thrash of the Gothenburg scene, which soon relents with the band's ability to shift between various tempos. Vocals range from

grating growls to soaring and clean at times. Thick guitar augmented by effective keyboard passages. Pontus Andersson's drumming is the highlight of the album. Intense, articulate, and highly expressive. Though this band falls into a category that is somewhat saturated these days, they offer a fresh perspective on the melodic death genre and give listeners tons of bang for their buck. Excellent debut recommended for fans of IN FLAMES, and SOILWORK. - Freddy Rollins CIPHER SYSTEM: www.cipher-system.com Lifeforce Recs: Box 938, 09009 Chemnitz, Germany www.lifeforcerecords.com



CIRITH GORGOR

Firestorm Apocalypse - Ketzer Records / Twilight Recs

In the three years since their last release CIRITH has developed into one of the finest black metal bands currently recording. This is an incredible album that shows how complex and expressive black metal can be. Atmosphere is a crucial element and Firestorm is aptly titled. The soundscape is rich with dark, moody textures hanging in the background to emphasize the majesty and aggression in the forefront. Lyrically, the band doesn't offer much in the way of new material, but that's fine. Black metal bands use fairly

common subjects and CIRITH is no different. Themes include hell on earth, warfare, and nightmare forests. The vocals are sung in the higher, raspy range and rarely dip into growls though some do shout out of the background periodically. Drumming is precise and drilled at blinding tempos. The searing guitar passages are a thrilling trek through a variety of rhythmic variation and consistently powerful throughout. Firestorm is an accomplishment for CIRITH and should catch the ears of all black metal fans. The album is currently available through Ketzer Records and being distributed by Twilight. Do yourself a favor and pick this up. - Kurt Krueger CIRITH GORGOR: www.cirithgorgor.tk Ketzer Records: c/o Alex Hehnle, Ortstrasse 60, 89081 Ulm-Ermingen, Germany www.ketzer-records.de Twilight-Vertrieb: Bahnhofstr. 13, 23701 Eutin, Germany www.twilight-vertrieb.com



DEAD TO FALL - *Villainy and Virtue* - Victory Recs

Chicago's DEAD TO FALL have released their second album, *Villainy and Virtue*. Their latest combines Swedish-feel metal with perhaps more hardcore than their debut. Formed in 1999, DEAD TO FALL have seen numerous changes. This new crew includes original members Jon Hunt on vocals, Justin Jakimak on bass, and main songwriter Antone Jones returning to assist. The latest line-up seems to work as this album is hard-hitting, yet earnest and intelligent. The vocals are angry and loud. When I first listened to *Villainy and Virtue*, it reminded me of early METALLICA (I mean that as a compliment). The band enlisted producer Eric Rachel (ATREYU, GOD FORBID), and the sound quality is superb. There is something new and exciting about this band and in this album, something somewhat still lingering but waiting to explode. I can tell that the band as a whole is evolving, and we can only wait, eagerly, for what we'll see of DEAD TO FALL in the future. - Errin Klein Victory Records: 346 N. Justine St, Ste#504, Chicago, IL 60607 USA www.victoryrecords.com



DEATH THREAT - *Now Here Fast* - Triple Crown Recs

Reviews of straight-up hardcore albums don't make it into the pages of Pit very often, but heavy is heavy and violent is violent. And Connecticut's DEATH THREAT hit straight between the eyes on both counts. It's all about being lacerated with heavy ass riffs and getting your nose broken in the pit anyway, right? You get something close to the same effect on Now Here Fast. For God & Government was all about vicious rhythms, hard ass drumming with plenty of double-bass assaults, and songs that don't bore you with excess. It's pretty much more of the same on Now Here Fast, perhaps more stripped down. The gang warfare group shouts, street tough anthems, and a collective cry to go fuck yourself still abound. Helping the band to stand out from the crowd are Aaron Butkus' more "normal" singing style; by that I mean the nasty attitude is still there, but he's not barking and screeching. Come on now metal kids, if you're looking to get your head kicked in, Now Here Fast should do the trick. - Scott Alisoglu Triple Crown Recs: 331 W 57th St, PMB 472, NY, NY 10019 USA www.triplecrownrecords.com



GUTTURAL SECRETE

Artistic Creation With Cranial Stumps - Unmatched Brutality Recs

In the tradition of DISGORGE, RETCH, GORGASM and DEEDS OF FLESH, comes this Las Vegas based band's impressive debut disc. The brainchild of vocalist/guitarist/lyricist Blue Jensen (he also designed the band's awesome logo), GUTTURAL SECRETE is the latest in a growing number of mega-brutal, up and coming extreme death acts like ARTERY ERUPTION, INTESTINAL STRANGULATION, and SEPTIC ASPHYXIATION. Just when you think this genre may be played out, one listen to Jensen's super low spews, his disturbingly entertaining lyrics, or the band's pummeling

breakdowns, and fans of sick metal can rest assured that the future looks bright. Matt Bruenig at Upfront Studios also deserves mention for the outstanding recording quality here. - Jon "K" Konjoyan GUTTURAL SECRETE: www.gutturalsecrete.com Unmatched Brutality Recs: PO Box 12023, Knoxville, TN 37912 USA www.unmatchedbrutality.com



INSISION - *Revealed and Worshipped* - Wicked World

This is the kind of album I search for in the death metal bin at the local shops. Brutal, guttural, and precision viciousness from the first second of *Revealed*. One of the albums none of your relatives or neighbors will appreciate, so crank it up. INSISION begs to be played in the middle of the night on the eleventh volume setting on your stereo. My only complaint is the short length, eleven tracks in barely over a half hour. Definitely could have hung in for more. Vocals are sung from way down in the toes and largely percussive in their usage because the lyrics are tough to discern,

which doesn't take away from the performance at all. Drumming is bestial at best, very controlled syncopations that create a delightfully broken rhythm. Most impressive nod on the album goes to the guitar work. Equal parts insane and logical, incredible riffs and solo work all around. Favorite tracks include "We Did Not Come to Heal" and "The Cleansing." INSISION is hot off of the tour bus with SUFFOCATION this year, a definite success that will hopefully translate into strong record sales. This is a great album for any fans of SUFFOCATION, DEEDS OF FLESH, or NASUM. - Kurt Krueger Earache Records: 43 West 38th St, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10018 USA www.earache.com

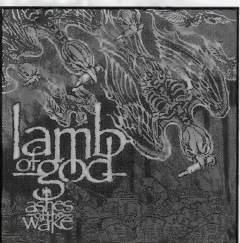


JAPANISCHE KAMPFHÖRSPIELE

Hardcore Aus Der Ersten Welt - Bastardized Recordings

You have to wake up pretty early in the morning to impress me these days. These guys got up yesterday. I'm a sucker for an awesome grindcore album and this is it. Crawling out of the gutters of Germany, JaKa has developed a frenetic sound that is part fusion jazz, part punk, part grind, part metal, all fucking good. Hopefully the fact that the lyrics are all sung in German won't affect record sales here in the States because it absolutely should not. The vocal performance is commendable with two singers on polar antipodes, half screech, and half growl. I'd like to describe the guitars for you,

but really there are no words. This album is pure chaos and the guitar work is defined as much by its sound as it is by its silence. Bizarre collections of riffs that work like a collage to create a tremendous soundscape. The drumming is equally insane and rarely holds the same beat for more than a few bars. Fans of CEPHALIC CARNAGE, NAPALM DEATH, or any other grind project you can name will appreciate this. If you are insane, this could very well be the soundtrack for your insanity. Great job. - Kurt Krueger JAPANISCHE KAMPFHÖRSPIELE: www.japanischekampfhorspiele.de Bastardized Recordings: PO Box 200521, 56005 Koblenz, Germany www.bastardizedrecordings.de



LAMB OF GOD - *Ashes of the Wake* - Epic Recs

If you haven't heard of LAMB OF GOD by now, get your head out of your ass! This Virginia quintet is one of the biggest bands plaguing America's youth right now. On tour with Ozzfest and co-headlining the second stage are definite points in LOG's favor. Their rapidly growing reputation is built on a spirited vocal performance, intelligent songwriting, precision drumming, and highly creative guitars. *Ashes* is the third release and already shows the signs of a veteran project. Slick production and the "excellence of execution" as Bret "The Hitman" Hart used to call it back in the glory days of

the WWF. In addition to the LOG crew, Chris Poland from MEGADETH and Alex Skolnick from personal favorite TESTAMENT show up for guest appearances. Delivering up twelve essential cuts in fifty minutes, LOG continues to raise the bar for the metal masses. Favorite tracks include "The Faded Line" and "Remorse is for the Dead." This album should receive more applause than the band's already classic sophomore effort. They should be swinging through your town sometime soon and are definitely worth the price of admission. One of the best live performances you will ever see. - Freddy Rollins Epic Records: 550 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022-3211 USA

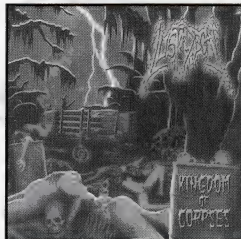


LUDICRA

Another Great Love Song – Alternative Tentacles

What's this, a black metal band on Alternative Tentacles Records? Not surprisingly, Jello Biafra wouldn't settle for just any 'ole USBM band. The seven tracks here go well beyond your standard jagged-edge riffing and blast beats. These rather epic compositions include plenty of slash and stomp, harsh vocals, and a seriously eerie vibe, yet also include bits of acoustic guitar, icy melodic vocals, some thrashy elements, drumming that you can feel in your bones, and an all around boundary-pushing approach.

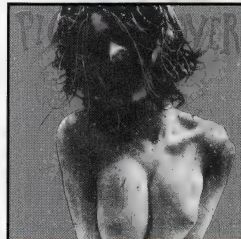
Now before you decide that this bunch isn't "kult" enough, rest assured that the album is still savage black metal without a hint of mainstream appeal. Certainly the fact that the lineup boasts members of **HAMMERS OF MISFORTUNE** and **IMPALED** has something to do with this genre twist. The icing on the cake is a crusty Billy Anderson production. This is an album you don't merely listen to; you absorb. – Scott Alisoglu **Alternative Tentacles: PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141 USA www.alternativetentacles.com**



LUST OF DECAY – Kingdom of Corpses – Comatose

This album is a pretty fair approximation of the death metal genre. That being said, there's no danger involved here. One of the aspects I search for in death metal albums is freshness and there isn't much going on with this recording in the way of new ground. That's not to say that this album isn't worth a listen. Fans of **DEICIDE** and **CANNIBAL CORPSE** should appreciate what LOD is doing with their music. *Kingdom* displays great density of sound, articulate and fast-paced drumming, and vicious vocals. The album's ten songs barely break the thirty-minute barrier, so you

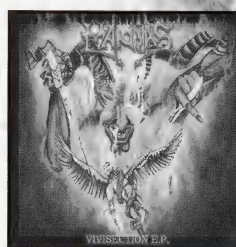
know that this platter is spinning fast. This is certainly an album for the neck-breakers in the pit and fans that enjoy pissing off their neighbors. Had some difficulty reading lyrics due to the fact that they are damn near microscopic on the page. *Kingdom* for me is filler for the CD rack and if you are looking for bands to check out, this is definitely worth the dough. If you are looking for a fresh perspective on a traditional genre, look elsewhere. – Freddy Rollins **LUST OF DECAY: www.lustofdecay.com Comatose Music: PO Box 1518, Kings Mountain, NC 28086 USA www.comatosemusic.com**



PIG DESTROYER – Terrifyer – Relapse Recs

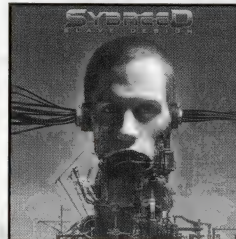
I must admit that I didn't know what to think when I picked this up. The name alone is enough to turn most transient fans away from the album, but don't turn away. **PIG DESTROYER** has a terrific reputation already and there are some very good reasons for that rep. *Terrifyer* gives you twenty-one of those reasons in a hair's width over thirty minutes. PD's sound is a mix of everything you can possibly imagine: punk, grind, thrash, death, whatever else you can think of. The cool thing about this band is that they don't care how people classify them; they just keep putting out kick ass

albums one after the other. This is absolute aural insanity. The vocals are screamed at the top of painfully strained lungs. The guitars are simply all over the place; in one minute shredding out brutal riffs and in the next noodling out a savage solo. The drums on this defy description. They rely on the maddening syncopation of grindcore to keep a broken rhythm throughout then twist that back into some form of order at times. Insane. This album is a dream come true for fans of the grind genre or tunes that will get you thrown into the local loony bin. **PIG DESTROYER** is simply one of the best bands around. Pick this shit up. – Freddy Rollins **PIG DESTROYER: www.pigdestroyer.net Relapse Records: PO Box 2060, Upper Darby, PA 19082 USA www.relapse.com**



MANIAS – Vivisection E.P. – Independent Release

After serving five years in federal prison for transporting pot, **Andrew Ruiz** has a lot of pent up aggression. Lucky for us, he channels that energy into his music. Ruiz mixes hallowed vocal influences of bands like **SOD** or **SODOM** with an irresistibly sick grinding death metal tone. Awesome jams and a satisfying low end click together to recommend this brutal blend of groovy death/grind. Known as "jeweler to the stars," Ruiz's other talent is in creating exquisitely crafted inverted crosses, pentagrams and rings. (He counts **VITAL REMAINS** and **Glen Benton** among his clientele). The band is set to appear on several upcoming comps, and look for more of a technical death metal approach on their next CD, tentatively titled *...And Blood Spoked The World*. – Jon "K" Konjoyan **MANIAS: 1300 Lead Ave SE #B2, Albuquerque, NM 87106 USA www.manias.us**



SYBREED – Slave Design – Reality Entertainment

You'll see reviewers the world over reference bands like **MESHUGGAH** and **FEAR FACTORY** in describing *Slave Design* by Sweden's **SYBREED**. And the comparisons to those bands will be fairly accurate. To my way of thinking, the style is closer to **FEAR FACTORY** (e.g., speedy and punishing kick drum blasts and harsh-to-clean vocals), but with some of the odd rhythm patterns of **MESHUGGAH**. I'd also venture to say that a good chunk of the music is not unlike what you might hear on the last couple of **IN FLAMES** albums, at least the harsh vocal portions and a bit of that thrashy, modern metal delivery. Of course, the common thread is the down-tuned guitars and punchy rhythms. By now, you've certainly got a good idea of what to expect from *Slave Design*. **SYBREED** is actually not a clone of any of the aforementioned bands, mainly because the melodic vocal sections are *really* melodic, and the electronic/industrial part of the music is much more pronounced. Given my personal tastes, it's probably not one I'll spin very often, but I did find it somewhat refreshing. – Scott Alisoglu **Reality Entertainment: PO Box 91, Foresthill, CA 95631 USA www.reality-entertainment.com**



THROCULT

Stormbringer: Conjunction of the Nighthorde – Crash Music

I've been fortunate to see **THROCULT** evolve over the years from my home base in Denver and I love to see the locals getting some widespread attention, especially when they deserve it. Hopefully, **THROCULT** will break into new markets with *Conjunction*. This is a strong representative of the American black metal scene and should remind fans of **FOG** or older **OLD MAN'S CHILD**. Nine tracks of blazing speed tempered at times by the band's ability to shift gears and create some solid groove within their rhythmic passages. I really like Ivan's vocal work and feel that it is one of **THROCULT**'s major assets.

The lyrics for this one are strong, but somewhat limited. I would really like to see more black metal bands freshen the metaphors that we have all trampled deeply into the battlefields. Guess I'll just have to keep hoping. Aside from a solid vocal performance, *Conjunction* also serves up some sick drums that dictate a fast pace with smart tempo changes. The guitars tend to be more rhythmic than melodic, but definitely create a dense and dark atmosphere. Overall, this is very good and I hope to see **THROCULT** continue to challenge themselves and their fans as they further develop into a fine black metal outfit. Recommended for black metal fans and aficionados alike. – Kurt Krueger **THROCULT: www.throcult.com Crash Music: 4025 E. Chandler Blvd, #70B-3, Phoenix, AZ 85048 USA www.crashmusicinc.com**

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GRASPOP METAL MEETING

BY CHRISTOPHER ALO

Dessel, Belgium June 25th - 27th 2004

Who would have ever thought that Belgium, normally known for its beer and chocolate,

would be the home to one of the world's greatest metal festivals? Well it's true and the 2004 edition of the Graspop Metal Meeting will go down in the record books as one of the best festivals this reporter has ever seen.

The bands at Graspop play on three massive stages. There are two large stages housed under enormous "circus" style tents and one even bigger "open air" main stage in the middle of those two. Vendors selling everything from t-shirts, spikes and combat boots to hamburgers and beer encircle the perimeter of the festival area.

Day one is a "warm up" day, but that really isn't as accurate as the warm up lasts 11 hours! First real band I catch is New York's own SUFFOCATION. The reunited nineties death metal act are insanely fast and superbly tight. I was never that big of a fan, but you have to admire their fast paced musicianship. The sound system in both tent stages is just incredible. Total guttural vocals and SLAYER-esque guitar solo's resonate throughout the wood floors and tarp ceiling. The best dedication of the day comes from SUFFOCATION vocalist Frank Mullen. He dedicates "Breeding The Spawn" to "all the beautiful ladies here in Belgium, because this is about making babies", to which the crowd roars in approval. Nice to see that his subtlety isn't lost in translation!

England's ANATHEMA takes over on the opposing stage. While they are really no longer a metal band, they still have some songs that pack a punch. Opening with the hard driving "Fragile Dreams" is the perfect way to kick off the proceedings, as they continue to walk the line between genres. Songs like "Empty" and "Harmonium" balance the set between adrenaline charged rock and PINK FLOYD spaced out headiness.

ICED EARTH wisely drops the intro of "The Star Spangled Banner" and run headlong into the fast paced opener "Declaration Day". Due to ongoing neck problems Jon Shaffer just slightly bangs his head with his long graying hair wisping in the wind. Vocalist Tim "Ripper" Owens hits all the spots on his own material as well as easily covering the ground laid by his predecessor, Matt Barlow. "Burning Times", "Dracula", "Something Wicked", are just some of the extensive IE pot they dip into. It is rather ironic that ICED EARTH featuring one time JUDAS PRIEST vocalist "Ripper" Owens are headlining the first day of the fest while JUDAS PRIEST, reunited with Rob Halford are headlining on the last.

Day two kicks off bright and early at noon with EVERGREY on the massive main stage. I catch only a few minutes of the Swedish heavy prog-metal, because at noon, the whistle blows...and it's not for lunchtime, it's time for the Metal Market!!! The Metal Market is one of my favorite reasons for attending the European festivals. It is a giant tent, literally packed to the gills with vendors selling their heavy metal wares from around the globe. The Europeans are much more open minded about "bootleg" merchandise than we are in the States, and this makes for spectacular shopping. Live IRON MAIDEN DVD's, rare SLAYER CD's, CAN-NIBAL CORPSE shorts, CRADLE OF FILTH coffee mugs, DIMMU BORGIR dress shirts, HYPOCRISY candles, and more vinyl than I have ever seen in my life. It's enough to make my head explode! I try and do as much shopping as I can before heading off to catch the next band.

Hair metal is still metal, as far as the Europeans are concerned, hence the inclusion of BRIDES OF DESTRUCTION, MOTLEY CRUE and L.A.

GUNS ring leaders Nikki Sixx and Traci Guns actually make a decent pairing as is evident on their aggressive opener, "Shut The Fuck Up". Their punk/metal hybrid gets a surprisingly warm reception from the hung over European crowd, with fans singing along. But their vocalist just totally blows. He has trouble hitting some of his own high notes, which is pretty bad, but the end of the set is where he really loses it. On the MOTLEY CRUE numbers "Live Wire" and "Shout At The Devil", this guy's voice shows more cracks than the liberty bell. I know Vince Neil doesn't even sound like Vince Neil anymore, but this guy just blows.

But just when you think it's safe to skip a band, it's not. I've never heard of SCARVE, so I decide to scarf down a slice of pizza instead of watching the beginning of their set. Bad idea. I just happen to catch SCARVE playing their final song, "Irradiant", and they are mighty impressive. Hailing from France (of all places), they are like STRAPPING YOUNG LAD, but less chaotic and injected with more melody. And with two vocalists! I'm so impressed that I immediately jump back into the Metal Market tent to pick up their newest CD (*Irradiant* on Listenable Records). Good stuff! Here's to hoping I catch them at another European festival soon.

The ever-powerful MORBID ANGEL can still pack in quite a crowd. Even though I think Steve Tucker isn't up to his previous standard, it's still good to hear golden oldies like "Rapture" and "Lord Of All Fevers And Plagues". And some of the new material like "Beneath The Hollow" just has a killer groove, which sends lots of Europeans banging their unwashed heads.

And speaking of unwashed heads, look no further than Max Cavalera of SOULFLY. His once long dreadlocks have wasted away to be one giant, disgustingly matted clump of dead hair on top of his head. Gloria, please, cut that thing off in his sleep! While trying not to focus on the dead looking squirrel attached to Max's skull, the band churns through "Prophecy" and even some old SEPULTURA numbers.

When Lemmy waltzes out with his dyed jet-black hair and painted on leather pants, you know what is next. Their set is typical MOTORHEAD fare, and as enjoyable as ever. We get the standard classics ("No Class", "Metropolis") and some rarely played gems ("Shoot You In The Back" and even "Over The Top"). Philip "The Beast" Campbell mentions that they have a new album, *Inferno*, and says that "It's really good, we like it", but then they wind up not playing a single track!

It's been a few years since I've seen him live, but ALICE COOPER still has it. The massive stage is perfect for ALICE to march across like a drill sergeant. With so much material to pick from, it is great to hear tracks like "Hello, Hooray" and "Desperado". The highlight of the show is when a hot S&M dancing girl interrupts ALICE while he is directing the band with a conductor's wand. Incensed at this, he grabs the girl and pulls a knife out of the bottom of the conductor's wand. He then slits the girl's throat with a knife, showering the front row with a bloody arterial spray!

Day three is near impossible to cover. Not a bad band on the bill and three stages going simultaneously. Difficult decisions need to be made about what band to watch, but it's a no-brainer when it comes to watching TESTAMENT. With Eric Peterson temporarily sidelined, his replacement is none other than HALFORD and PAIN MUSEUM guitarist Metal Mike Chalasziak and the thrash titans are unstoppable. With Metal Mike, Steve DiGiorgio and Paul Bostaph it's like TESTAMENT have become the metal United Nations, and they are as fantastic as ever. Nothing but classics like "New Order" and "Over The Wall" fill the set and Chuck Billy looks and sounds as healthy as he has ever been.

Some people love them, but I just can't grasp the appeal of THERION. Classically influenced metal was never my thing and their set goes way over my head. Guitarist and part time vocalist Christofer Johnsson sounds OK, but the stuff with the choir just grates on my nerves. And there is this fat girl in the choir who is so nervous the whole time she looks like a deer caught in headlights. This nervous mountain of a woman is sweating profusely as her skin is suffocating in ultra form fitting spandex. She looks

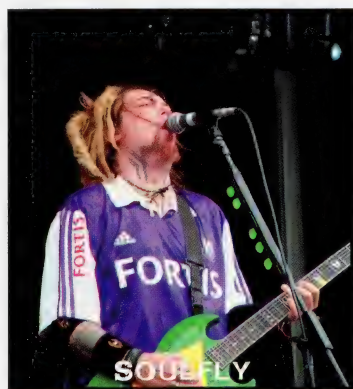


like they tried to shove ten pounds of potatoes into a five-pound bag. Christofer's intro of "Blood of Kingu" is enticing, but when I find out it's not a VADER cover, I head for higher ground.

Comeback of the year has got to go to **FEAR FACTORY**. With a killer new album, *Archetype*, they pull out all the stops in their all too brief performance. The industrial cyber thrash kings pummel the audience throwing out blistering tracks from "Martyr" to "Slave Labor" with everything else in between.

While their profile in the US is a bit hidden, in Europe **SAXON** are massively popular, and justifiably so. With a back catalog of working man's metal anthems, their set is a true Headbangers wet dream. Whether vocalist Biff Byford is whistling the intro to "Motorcycle Man" or bellying out the chorus to the bombastic "Denim And Leather", it's an hour of non-stop fist pumping, rivaled only by the night's headliner.

Which happens to be none other than the reunited **JUDAS PRIEST**, who is the final act of the massive three-day fest. While vocalist Rob Halford may not move as fast as he did 20 years ago, his pipes haven't tarnished in the least. And just seeing Halford reunited on stage with the twin axe attack of KK Downing and Glen Tipton makes the trip to Europe worthwhile alone. Their blazing set includes the obvious numbers like "Hell Bent For Leather" to even a few surprises like "United" and an acoustic "Diamonds And Rust".



others. The 2005 lineup is set for the last weekend in June and it is to be their tenth anniversary spectacular. If #9, kicked this much ass, how insane is #10 going to be? I've already heard rumors of just some of the headlining bands, and believe me, it will be THE metal event of the millennium. Start saving pennies now; Graspop 2005 is a show not to be missed. Go to www.graspop.com for the latest updates.

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ARTISTS OF THE MACABRE

By Kelli Malella



For this issue's Artists of the Macabre I had the chance to speak to Craig Simpson who has worked on covers with bands like USURPER, BURNING INSIDE, EQUINOX, DISTANT THUNDER, Z-LOT-Z, OMEN, SATHANAS, and RESUSCITATOR just to name a few. Craig has been drawing, painting or "making some creative mess" since he was six years old. "I realized my artistic projects were always a little bit better than the rest of my class and when a kid gets praise for something like that they tend to want to do more." Although Craig still feels as if he has a long way to go before he considers himself to be at the level of the artists that he admires. Craig started to think about creating art as a living about a year after he got out of high school when he met a couple of local artists that were making a pretty respectable living off their art. "I thought I would rather give this a shot than some other job that I didn't like" states Craig. He has now been working professionally for almost 13 years.



Pit: Did you have to go to a school to learn the method of art that you use? If you did where did you go to school and how long were you there? Was it worth your time and money?

Craig Simpson: I didn't have to go to school for art but I did get a little bit of a scholarship to attend Kendall College Of Art & Design and as far as schools go this one was great. I have a BFA with an Illustration major and this school was a blast. I am proud to say I have a four-year degree there and it gave me a great start to painting at a more professional level. Kendall did teach me how to concentrate, observe and think as an artist; plus, lots of color theory and other basics that have allowed me to further my abilities as an artist.

How did you get your first break creating art for a bands album cover?

I kind of went in two directions. One, I sent a piece of art to a metal contest and won. Two, I found a small indie label that needed some help and that got my art on a CD then I started getting involved in the scene, passing out samples at festivals and shows, then built a website and the snowball effect took over. I basically gave away art at first to build awareness.

What would you recommend for people that are interested in getting into designing art for album covers?

Be open, be flexible and understand that it is art for someone else. Stay humble; you are not a rock star. It is the art that is important. Advertise, advertise, and advertise.

What style would you say you have when it comes to your art?

Sometimes I call it CRAP! A more traditional answer would be realism with a touch of surrealism in a very wicked setting. I feel very ignorant with this question, basically it is horror/fantasy and as real and believable as I can make it look. I used to try to be hyper-polished with my art but I have found that it tends to look a little flat and lose its personality.

How do you get started creating an album cover?

After conversations with the band and/or label and nailing down a concept I start doing a great deal of research. I will look through piles of photos to start gathering information to build the basic composition. I will do a few very rough sketches then usually one stands out. After approval from the band, I transfer the sketch onto an illustration board

and I usually start speaking from the background to the foreground.

Do you prefer one medium to the others or do you just use what you can to get the best image possible?

I use whatever it takes to achieve the effect that I want. For the most part I paint using acrylics, brushes, large airbrushing. Sometimes I use watercolor pencils, and regular colored pencils. I have also used markers on a painting. Just like you said I will use whatever it takes.

Name some of the bands that you have designed covers for and some that you would like to work for.

USURPER, BURNING INSIDE, EQUINOX, DISTANT THUNDER, Z-LOT-Z, OMEN,

SATHANAS, and RESUSCITATOR are a few of the bands I have worked on. As far as who I would like to paint a cover for, KING DIAMOND, KING DIAMOND & KING DIAMOND!!!!!!

What are some of your favorite or most memorable covers that you have had the chance to work on? Why?

It's not so much the artwork that is memorable to me as it is the great people that I have met illustrating in this field. My website was built by Gregg Gill of Spider Designs who is also the guitar player for Z-LOT-Z and DISTANT THUNDER. I am currently working on my third USURPER album and Rick Scythe (guitar player) and the rest of the band have been so supportive and great to work with. Richard Christy has also become a good friend after working with him and BURNING INSIDE. So far we've only have I met some very amazing people doing this work, but these people I also consider friends.

One interesting incident that happened when working on BURNING INSIDE's second album was the morning I was planning to work all day on their cover. I was outside in the backyard and got stung by some wasps in my right hand (my painting hand). My hand immediately swelled up and went numb and stiff so it made holding a paint brush very difficult. As a result I taped paintbrushes to my hand and finished the painting with wasp venom in my hand. The band ended up nicknaming me "wicked hand", which is now the name of my studio.

Any new covers in the making that you can tell me about?

Yes, actually I am finishing up the new USURPER cover and I have a couple more booked that will keep me busy for the rest of the year.





Tell me about the process when a band or label comes to you asking you to create cover art for them.

The band usually contacts me through email and we start discussing what they want and I will ask as many questions as possible to get the most information so I can accurately start sketching ideas.

When you are asked to work on a cover, do you feel it is best to have the music and lyrics to create something specifically for that band?

Yes, I love reading the lyrics especially if the title of the album is based off one of the songs because usually there are very good visual elements within the lyrics. I feel that anytime you can relate the art to the lyrics/music the entire album becomes stronger. Many times when a band sends me an advanced copy of the album it is all I will play while painting the cover. It helps me to stay connected to the entire project.

What is your main objective when creating a piece of work for a band?

To paint something new and fresh in a way that is interesting and also complements the music and the band.

Do you let the band have a say in what you create or do you just say, "here is what I can do with, like it or leave it"?

I love the bands input. I welcome as many thoughts and ideas they have. There is a point the painting has to be completely turned over to me and we have an understanding that during the painting process the illustration takes on a life of its own. I can't imagine not being flexible and having the attitude of "take-it-or-leave-it". There are too many good artists out there to take your place plus, I am painting this for someone else. It's the bands art.

Is this your dream job or do you plan on working in different medium?

Being able to make a living at something I love is a dream. I do have other things I want to accomplish in my art career, but I will always be an artist that is a part of the metal world.

I see that you like to paint your album covers, which most people don't do any more. Do you feel that this is a better way to create an album cover then using anything digital?

I don't know if it's better. I have done some digital illustrating but there is something about applying paint to a board to create an image. I like it a lot more than digital. It is more of a challenge to me to work with paint. You can see and feel the work it has more life to it.

When you are creating a piece just for yourself do you find that your inspiration comes from music and if it doesn't where does it come from?

I listen to metal all day long so sometimes it generates an image. A lot of inspiration comes from dreams. In fact almost half of my paintings have had some problems in them solved from a dream I had while working on them. I read a lot and I am always looking at photos and other art. I admire a lot of other artists and their imaginations and I always learn something from them no matter what style or medium they work in.

Are you a total metal head?

ABSOLUTELY! COMPLETELY! 100%

Any final comments?

Kelly, I can't tell you how cool I think what you are doing is. It's easy to interview and have columns with the bands but the whole visual representation of the metal world is a very important part. For example, when I am working on a cover painting I take on the attitude that this is also my band and I care about their success and know quality artwork can add to it. Thank you very much for this opportunity. I am honored to be in *Pit Magazine*.



Craig Simpson
illustrations

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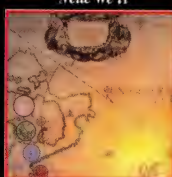
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TATTOO MACHINE

Featuring Jason Avery

By Kelli Malella

For this issue of Pit Magazine's Tattoo Machine I got to talk to Jason Avery who is also the vocalist of the Florida death metal band MONSTROSITY. Getting his first tattoo at the ripe ol' age of 15 is what initially sparked his interest in tattoos. "The more I saw the type of art that some artists are capable of producing, I was amazed, and I knew it was something I was interested in doing." Most of Jason's life has been spent in bands so he didn't actually start tattooing seriously until about six years ago. When Jason was younger he started out by tattooing people with homemade machines. "...but that doesn't really count. When I actually got serious about it, I spent a lot of time reworking some really bad tattoos on friends of mine." After a few months Jason got a job in a shop and worked there for about four years also traveled to some conventions in Europe and the US during that time. "I was fortunate to be working with some really good artists, and I think that really helped my progress as a tattoo artist." Recently Jason has taken some time off to tour with MONSTROSITY but when he isn't on the road he is working at Platinum Tattoo in Tampa, FL where as Jason puts it he feels "very fortunate to be working with such talented artists in this shop as well."

Pit: How did you get to where you are today in the sense of creativity, design, and workmanship?

Jason Avery: There are a lot of things that have gotten me to where I am now. I've always really been into dark music and artwork, and that influences me a lot. Some of the cutting edge tattooing that's being done by other artists, like Robert Hernandez, Grime, Adrian Lee, Corey Kruger, Paul Booth, and guys of that caliber, is definitely inspiring. Some of the concepts are absolutely fucking sick and should inspire any good artist to explore different realms of the medium that you typically don't see. Unfortunately, there's a very trendy side to tattooing and a lot of people want trendy tattoos.

Would you say that you specialize in color or b&w? Or both? Please explain why and if you find color more difficult than b&w.

I would say color is more my thing, but I love doing black and gray also. It really depends on what the design is. If it's something that requires a more evil or realistic look, black and gray works best. I really enjoy doing those types of images, but color tattoos, for me, are just more fun. I wouldn't really say color is more difficult, but I approach it differently than I would a black and gray tattoo.

What do you feel people should know when it comes to getting a new tattoo?

Definitely look at the portfolios of artists before making a decision on who you want to do your tattoo. Because this business has become so popular, there are a lot of people tattooing that shouldn't be. In fact, they should have their hands broken. I see so much bullshit come into my shop because people shop for a price instead of quality. This definitely isn't a bargain shopping type of decision to make.

Will you tell someone if you think the piece they want to get is not such a good idea? Or is it more of they want it they can have it?

I would definitely tell someone if I don't think it's a good idea. If someone wants an image that I don't think will reflect my type of tattooing, I won't do it just for money. Even though some of the people that you have to deal with should be skinned alive in front of their families, the tattoo I do on them still reflects me.

Where do you get the inspiration for your art?

Again, a lot of the artists I'm into and that I work with are extremely inspiring. And the type of music I'm interested in (metal) has a lot of great artwork associated with it. I like to do these types of images whenever I get a chance.

When people come in to get work done do they give you the actual art that they want and say "don't change it" or "make this better" or do they just tell ya to go to town?

A little bit of both... A lot of people come with ideas and just need some way to put it into tattoo form. Some people just want your typical trendy tribal band or kanji, but some people will just give you a concept and let you run with it. I think you get your best tattoo when artists can do their style of art. It's much more interesting to create something in your head and transfer it to skin, then it's something totally original.

How much time do you need when you work on someone from start to finish? Like when they decide what they want do you tell them to wait a

few weeks while you work on it or do you start immediately?

It really depends on the type of tattoo. If it's something really large and intricate, then I like to have some time to work with it. But more simple designs obviously don't take as much time.

What are your plans as far as work goes? Do you want to open your own shop at one point, travel around the world, or get into other avenues of art?

I'm not really interested in owning my own shop at this point. I'm really happy where I am. I'm more interested in traveling and doing more conventions. As far as other types of art, I do a lot of painting, and I really want to get into airbrushing.

What are some of your other hobbies outside of tattoos? Do you have a life outside of the shop?

Well, of course, I like playing music. I've been playing in death metal bands for fifteen years. But I also am extremely into martial arts, primarily Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and Muay Thai boxing. To be honest with you, that's about all I do. I'm really pretty obsessed with it.

What bands are you into at the moment? Have you done work on any bands yet and if you have who?

I've done a lot of tattooing on Brian Hoffman from DEICIDE; he's gotten some really big pieces from me. I've also tattooed guys from DIMMU BORGIR and MORBID ANGEL. As far as music goes, I'm really into DIMMU BORGIR right now. But for the most part, I still listen to a lot of the classic stuff I've been listening to for years.

If you could tattoo anyone in the world who would it be (alive or dead)?

Jesus Christ. I think that would be fucking hilarious.

What do you suggest for aspiring tattoo artists? How should they get started and whom should they look to for help?

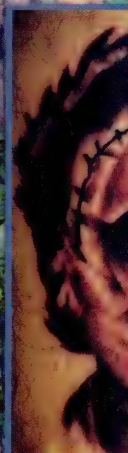
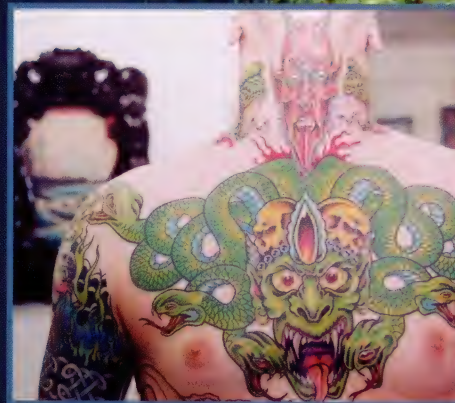
I think all aspiring tattoo artists should quit.

What is it like doing vocals for MONSTROSITY and being a tattoo artist? Ever feel like you don't have enough time for both?

No, tattooing for a living usually has a pretty flexible schedule. That's one of the benefits; I never have any problem with travel. I mean, let's face it, I do tattoos and vocals for a death metal band. It's not like I dig ditches for a living. It's really not that bad.

Okay that's it. Any last words?

Thanks to everyone at Pit Magazine for doing this interview; I think it's a really cool thing to feature tattoo artists. Also thanks to all the MONSTROSITY fans and anyone who's interested in getting tattooed by me, contact me at:





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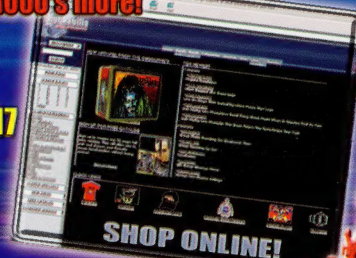
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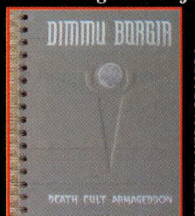


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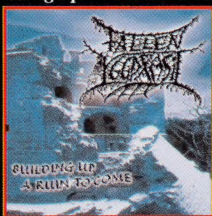


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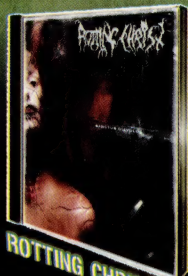
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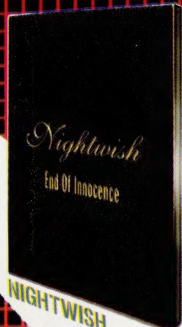
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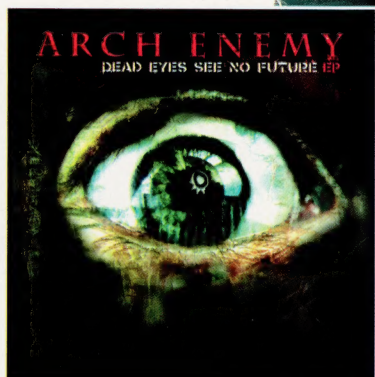
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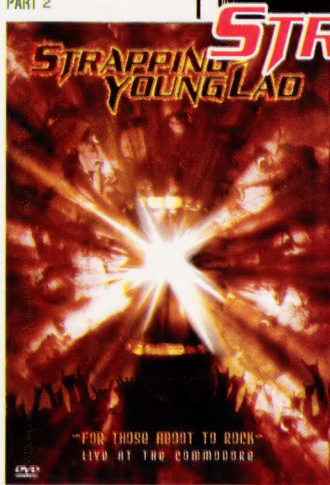
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DAMAGEPLAN

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"Lord, How We Miss Him..."

